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**101.3
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Region prepares white-nosed syndrome plans

EDANA ROBITAILLE
for Metro Halifax

BATS Nova Scotia bats are in danger of an extremely contagious, fatal disease known as white-nosed syndrome.

Although the disease hasn't reached Nova Scotia bats yet, Dr. Hugh Broders, chair of the department of biology at Saint Mary's, says it's only a matter of time before it does.

Representatives from each of the Atlantic provinces met at Saint Mary's University to discuss what the best plan of action is when bats in Atlantic Canada become threatened. Although not much is known about the condition, Broders says it's important to learn as much as possible to save the bats.

White-nosed syndrome causes a white fungus to grow on the noses and ears of bats while they are hibernating. The disease can result in tens of thousands of deaths in bat populations.

Local pg 2

Kiss to rock Halifax city?

Television pg 26



Jason Priestley's Gemini dream



An excavator rips down part of a two-storey home in Lake Echo after an elderly man was killed in an early morning fire yesterday.

Man dies in fire

'Aggressive' Lake Echo blaze claims 'kind, sweet' neighbour

PAUL MCLEOD
paul.mcleod@metronews.ca

An elderly man died yesterday when he was unable to escape his Lake Echo home during a vicious house fire.

Firefighters were called to 117 River Drive at 4:41 in the morning and found the home engulfed in flames.

"They started an offensive fire attack right away, so they took hose lines and entered the building to try to contain the fire and search for people," said fire department

"(The firefighters) encountered temperatures above and beyond what our equipment is actually designed to take."

Capt. Dave Meldrum

spokesman Capt. Dave Meldrum.

Firefighters found one man, believed to be the homeowner, Ted Misztela, but weren't able to tell his condition because of the smoke and heat. They pulled Misztela out of the house where they discovered he had died.

Firefighters searched, but did not find anyone

else in the house. Eventually, they had to pull out because the heat was too intense.

"It was a really aggressive fire," said Meldrum.

"Our protective equipment is only good to a certain extent. They encountered temperatures above and beyond what our equipment is actually designed to take."

Neighbours described Misztela as a kind, sweet man who loved being outdoors. He could often be seen chopping firewood in his lawn.

Misztela lived alone, though family members would visit. Officials said no one else was harmed in the fire, but one firefighter broke his wrist when he slipped and fell on ice.

The roof of the house collapsed during the fire and the rest was brought down by emergency crews. Officials are investigating how the fire started.

Teen arrested after Lockview High School bomb threat

RACHEL BOOMER
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FALL RIVER RCMP arrested a 15-year-old Wednesday after someone e-mailed bomb threats to a staff member at Lockview High School on Tuesday night.

The threats said a bomb would go off at the school this week. Early Wednesday morning, before students arrived, the RCMP's explosive unit and its police-dog team searched the school. Nothing was found, and police were gone before students arrived, so classes weren't disrupted.

"We took it seriously enough to do a search of the school in the morning to make sure it was safe," RCMP Cpl. Joe Taplin said yesterday.

That afternoon, the technical crime unit tracked down the IP address the threats were sent from.

The teen will be charged with two counts of mischief. He'll be in court Jan. 1, 2009.

Halifax Regional School Board spokeswoman Shaune MacKinlay said the board takes these threats seriously, but staff understand that they happen.

"This kind of arrest does send a message to other young people who might consider doing this, and consider it a prank, that the consequences are very serious," MacKinlay said.

Lockdown

- The threats came just the day after a teenage girl threatened to kill two students at the school, but the two incidents weren't related.

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Canadians took more trips to the U.S. between April and June, but fewer Americans were coming to Canada. Spending by Canadians in the U.S. rose by 17.6 per cent to almost \$3.7 billion, an average of \$799 per overnight trip. **METRO HALIFAX**

Local



Workin' for the Feds

Here's a shocker: Halifax is a government town. According to Statistics Canada, we have the second-highest proportion of federal public servants in the country, at 8.1 per cent of our employed labour force. Ottawa-Gatineau, of course, had the highest, at 31.3 per cent.

METRO HALIFAX

Gas regulation here to stay

EDANA ROBITAILLE
for Metro Halifax



Nova Scotians are hoping that a report released today reviewing the provincial government's gas regulations doesn't result in higher prices at the pumps.

The report, released by Service Nova Scotia, finds that gas prices are more stable and predictable with the gas-regulation rules. With regulation, prices are found to be consistent throughout the province.

People at gas stations today were happy to see prices lower now than they've been since February 2005. Some didn't think that the review was necessary at all.

"I saw in the newspaper about the regulation of gas getting reviewed. I don't see the point. The people who did it are probably making good salaries, so I think it's a waste of money," said one man, who went only by Ketene, at the Superstore gas station on Barrington Street.

Dave Collins, vice-president of Wilson Fuel Inc. agrees.



Maureen Joudrey fills up her car at the Barrington Street Refuel gas bar yesterday. The provincial government plans to stick with regulation after receiving a positive review of the program.

"Regulation costs a lot of money to run — it is a social decision. Is it worth the \$6-\$7 million dollars extra it costs Nova Scotians? That will be people's choice at the next election."

John Allan Moores was thrilled that is was only costing him \$18 for half a tank.

"As long as it stays under

a dollar a litre, I'm sort of OK with that. When it goes over a dollar is when it starts to really hurt. A dollar for a litre of gas is a little extreme."

Collins thinks prices will stay low for awhile

"Prices will probably stay in the general range here for a while — unless there is a major move by OPEC in reducing supply."

Independent review released

Report finds system costly but effective

Gas regulation in Nova Scotia isn't going away any time soon.

After two years, an independent review shows the system costs more but is fulfilling its goal of stabilizing gas prices and keeping rural stations from closing.

"We're going to continue with regulation until we establish it is not good for Nova Scotians," said Service Nova Scotia Minister Jamie Muir.

"This report indicates that regulation has met its original goals. The number of price changes have been reduced, and consumers now know when changes will occur and can make somewhat more informed purchasing decisions."

Regulation does cost the province a total of about \$7 million per year — \$6 million in increased gas prices and \$900,000 to operate the program.

Nova Scotia's gas prices were an average of a half-cent per litre more expensive than they would have been without regula-

tion. That works out to about 25 cents each time you fill up your car, or \$12.50 per year.

Much of that money goes to securing margins for struggling rural gas retailers.

Both the Tories and NDP support regulation, but Liberal Leader Stephen McNeil said the program is a waste of money.

"I don't know of a Nova Scotian that's willing to pay an extra \$7 million," said McNeil. "Clearly this system is failing. It's time to scratch it."

The report by Gardner Pinfold found fewer rural stations have closed since regulation began and gas prices have standardized across the province.

One issue of concern Gardner Pinfold found was promotions by larger companies offering discounts on gas. These promotions were found to hurt independent retailers who don't have the resources to match the prices.

PAUL MCLEOD/METRO HALIFAX

Kiss reportedly considering Halifax stop

ROCK 'N' ROLL Kiss Army, ready yourselves. The make-up wearing rock band could be coming to Halifax.

In a recent interview with Sun Media, Gene Simmons said they're working on a new album and they expect to tour next year.

"We'll do a handful of shows to keep in the game (next) summer, maybe 10 (dates), some Canadian shows. I know Halifax is one, but before you get out there and start the baseball season, they hold exhibition games, that's what we're doing. 'Cause once we go out, it's going to be for a year and a half," Simmons said.

The organizer of last year's Kiss Expo said she's been in touch with the Kiss online staff. "I was talking to them earlier," she said. "There's nothing confirmed yet for any stops anywhere."

She advises fellow fans to be patient and wait for word from an official website.

The last time Kiss played Halifax was in 1977, she said. They were scheduled during a 1989-90 tour, but it was cancelled because singer Paul Stanley was injured.

JENNIFER TAPLIN/METRO HALIFAX

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Online tips for beating the flu

Looking for tips on how to fight the flu? Try www.fightflu.ca (or, for French, www.combattezlagrippe.ca.) It's a government-run website launched yesterday, offering advice on how to avoid getting the flu and how to take care of yourself. **METRO HALIFAX**

Chop shops linked: Cops

Police find stolen parts at second business in Harrietsfield

JENNIFER TAPLIN
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Police busted up another chop shop in Harrietsfield.

It was in "very close proximity" to the one dismantled in the summer, and RCMP Sgt. John Langille said the two shops are connected.

"They're connected (in) that the players know one another. They might interchange pieces to certain vehicles," he said.

Police knew about this chop shop when they took down the other one in May.

"We had some information, but we didn't know enough to act on it at that time," he said. He alleged the chop shop operates under a legitimate business heading and uses stolen business parts to supplement its regular business.

The address, which is in a public record, leads to Fraser Automotive on Old Sambro Road. A 26-year-old man from Portuguese Cove was arrested and will appear in



Corey MacDonald shows the damage to his truck that was stolen then recovered when police busted a chop shop in June. Another chop shop in Harrietsfield was recently broken up by police.

court in January. He will be charged with possessing stolen property of more than \$5,000 and breach of probation.

"Our investigation is ongoing and there may be further charges, but at this time only one person has been charged," Langille said.

In a search on Oct. 29, police found stolen car parts,

as well as addresses, parking codes and names of the remotes for the door openers for a dozen garages in the metro area.

"We've established that at least three of those (garages) — and they're still under investigation — that they've had vehicles stolen from underground garages," Langille said.

"We encourage building managers to consider changing their access codes on a fairly regular basis."

In June, 18 mutilated vehicles were recovered from a Harrietsfield chop shop and four men were arrested.

Police say the number of stolen cars in HRM is down 14 per cent in the first three quarters of the year.

City stocks up on road salt

ICE Wood pellets and snow tires may be in short supply around Halifax right now, but there's at least one winter necessity the city has stocked up on — road salt.

"We're doing fabulous. I don't think we're going to run out this year," said Gordon Hayward, HRM's winter works supervisor.

"The problem last year was excessive salt situations — Two-and-a-half times our normal amounts."

A salt shortage was felt all along the eastern seaboard last year, starting around mid-December. Retailers were cleaned out, sidewalks were slippery, and HRM's stockpile got dangerously low.

"It wasn't just getting (the salt), but the long waits to get it," Hayward said.

HRM usually uses 25,000 tonnes of salt. Last year it used 66,000.

Hayward said the problem wasn't the amount of snow, but the type. Snow would hit the ground, then the temperature would warm, coating roads with water before a frigid temperature dip turned it to ice.

"There were an awful lot of two-, three- or five-centimetre events on top of that, too," Hayward said.

The city can house 17,000 tonnes of salt, and the supply is continually refilled.

DEVIN STEVENS/METRO HALIFAX

Jimmy Melvin Jr. arrested in Dartmouth

CRIME Jimmy Melvin Jr. was arrested in Dartmouth yesterday.

Although he was ID'd by witnesses, he hasn't been formally charged and Halifax Regional Police spokesman Jeff Carr wouldn't identify him.

"A 26-year-old man was arrested at 1:15 p.m. on Windmill Road for uttering threats to a police officer," Carr said. "No charges have been laid as of yet; the per-

son was just arrested and taken into custody."

Melvin was released from jail earlier this month. Days later, shots were fired at his father outside a Spryfield pizzeria Nov. 17. A shooting the next day at the IWK children's hospital is also believed to be connected.

Police Chief Frank Beazley said police are taking "unprecedented measures" to stop the resumption of a drug war. **METRO HALIFAX**

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A Dartmouth man was charged after RCMP seized 80,000 contraband cigarettes and some pot from a Christopher Avenue, Dartmouth house Nov. 25. He will appear in court Jan. 6. **METRO HALIFAX**



EDANA ROBITAILE/FOR METRO HALIFAX

Feeling the pinch?

Family dinners don't have to cost a fortune

EDANA ROBITAILE
for Metro Halifax

Cook once, eat twice. That's the key to healthy eating on the cheap, says cookbook author Dana McCauley.

"A lot of people want to start cooking for themselves, but don't have the

confidence to start ... or they just don't know how to even shop in the store in a budgeted way," she says.

McCauley, who has published five cookbooks and contributes to numerous magazines, shared how to cook decent meals without breaking the bank.

She says it's possible to eat nutritious meals for \$10, \$15 or \$20. A family of four can eat for \$9.85. This meal includes frozen peas, ham-

burger helper and one bag of milk. If you find Hamburger Helper boring after a bit, keep in mind that there are 17 kinds.

For \$20, McCauley recommends a taco kit. The money will pay for the kit, a pound of ground beef, garnishes and a bag of milk.

There are a few reasons why shoppers go over budget at the grocery store. People who go in without a list will grab a lot of food they

might not need. Never, says McCauley, go grocery shopping on an empty stomach.

McCauley says the best bargains are hidden in the aisles. You need to give yourself time to go down every aisle to find the best sales. Coupon-clipping never hurts, and don't forget to stock up on family favourites when they go on sale. You can freeze them for later.

Also, she says don't be afraid to buy frozen vegetables instead of fresh. In many cases, they're actually more nutritious, since the constant grocery store misting of fresh veggies from down south can cause nutrients to dissolve.

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Dana McCauley recommends zesty herbed tomato lasagna

Ingredients:

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh oregano leaves
- 2 tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1/2 tsp each salt and pepper
- 3 cups tomato sauce
- 1/2 tsp granulated sugar
- 2 tbsp each chopped fresh parsley and basil
- 6 fresh lasagna noodles
- 1 1/4 cups shredded Parmesan
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella

Method: Heat oil in a wide

saucepan on medium-low heat. Add onion, garlic, oregano, thyme, basil, salt and pepper. Partially cover and cook, stirring often, for 10 minutes until onions soft. Stir in the tomato sauce and increase the heat to medium. Bring sauce to boil. Simmer, partially covered and stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes. Taste and add up to 1/2 tsp sugar if tangy. Stir in parsley, basil and one cup of the Parmesan cheese. Oil a 5 x 9 inch loaf pan. Preheat the

oven to 350F. Spoon a little sauce into the pan. Top with a noodle. Repeat until pan is filled. Cover with non-stick foil and bake 35 to 45 minutes or until bubbly. Sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and remaining Parmesan cheese. Broil for three minutes or until cheese is browned and bubbly. Makes 4 to 6 servings. Cook once, eat twice: Double this recipe and freeze one batch raw. Bake from frozen for 60 minutes. Top with cheese and broil as directed.



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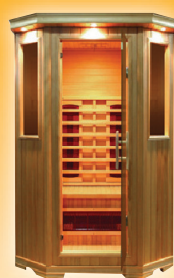
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Healthy Living hits schools

The province will train Grade 9 students about avoiding injury, as well as workplace health and safety, during a pilot project this school year. It'll be part of a compulsory Healthy Living course. There are 70,000 working Nova Scotians between 15 and 24. **METRO HALIFAX**

local **5**Dartmouth **Pedestrian hit**

A police officer takes measurements at the intersection of Alderney and Portland in Dartmouth yesterday after a 57-year-old man was struck by a vehicle at a crosswalk. The man was taken to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. A 27-year-old female driver was ticketed for failing to yield to a pedestrian at a crosswalk.

\$2.5M for aquaculture

EDANA ROBITAILLE
for Metro Halifax

The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture announced yesterday that it will be investing \$2.5 million in the aquaculture sector over the next three years.

The venture, with the help of the Department of Economic Development,

aims to help communities and workers who have been hit by economic challenges.

The funding will be used to find areas on the coast that have potential for aquaculture development. Fisheries Minister Ron Chisholm says that the province is well positioned to seize on its natural marine assets.

"Aquaculture has

tremendous growth potential in Nova Scotia," he says.

Economic Development Minister Angus MacIsaac feels that the investment will help create jobs.

"With \$53 million in farm-gate sales last year, aquaculture has become a significant and sustainable resource-based industry for Nova Scotia," MacIsaac says.

News in brief

FINANCES The Town of Stellarton approved its audited financial statements last night during a special meeting of council. Prepared by accounting firm Grant Thornton LLP, the statements represent the period ending March 31, 2008. They indicate the town generated \$8,492,740 in revenue, collecting 4.3 million in taxes. The document shows the town's total expenditures as \$9.01 million. It leaves a net expenditure of \$520,724.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Monia Mazigh, wife of Maher Arar, will be in Halifax on Tuesday, Dec. 2, to read from her new book, Hope and Despair. The free reading will be held at the Sobeys Building at Saint Mary's University. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Wal-Mart open late over holidays

KAMIA CREELMAN
for Metro Halifax

Wal-Mart is opening around the clock for the Christmas season.

Starting Dec. 1 in Mumford and Dec. 15 in Bayers Lake, Halifax Wal-Marts will join 192 others across Canada offering the chance to shop 24 hours a day.

Wal-Mart has been offering 24-hour service over Christmas since 2006, but never for the full month of December. It hopes the extended hours will appeal to shift workers, night owls and those who prefer the convenience of shopping in the quieter night hours.

Some Wal-Mart shoppers welcome the flexibility 24-hour operations bring.

"People are busy. Jobs keep them busy, family keeps them busy," said Maisie Mitchel, 74. "It's nice to know I can shop if I want to."

But not all shoppers see the wisdom of a never-closing Wal-Mart. "We've got enough commercialism now," Lawrence Nestman, 67, said. "Wal-Mart is making sufficient amounts of money. It's greed, and at some point we have to look at the spirit of Christmas."

Karin Campbell, spokesperson for Wal-Mart, said staff volunteer for the night shifts. Some need or want to be home during the day.

"It makes sense," another shopper, Maria Fournier, 19, said, "but I am happy I don't work here."



Wal-Mart is once again opening around the clock for the Christmas season. Mumford and Bayers Lake stores will offer 24-hour service throughout December.

Independence has its perks: Casey

POLITICS There's one Nova Scotia MP who won't bat an eyelash if party funding is cut to deal with the economic downturn.

Independent MP Bill Casey, who was turfed from the Conservative party after voting against it on the Atlantic Accord, says that's one upside to being a lone wolf.

"In an election, it's a disadvantage, but outside an election, it's not much," Casey said yesterday.

MPs from a political party can write tax receipts for donations, but Casey can't until an election is called. He also can't tap into the vote-based funding other parties get, or keep any extra money he's received.

Casey said the freedom to ask whatever questions he likes more than makes up for it. **METRO HALIFAX**



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Patients' families might get more help

EDANA ROBITAILLE
for Metro Halifax



ceive life-saving lung surgeries.

The provincial Health Department is in talks with the Nova Scotia Lung Association to see what can be done to cover the living expenses of patients who must go to Toronto to re-

A new bill put forward by the Liberals, and the emotional plea of Ken MacKay at the provincial legislature last Friday for financial support for his wife Marilyn, has Health Minister Chris D'Entremont considering the

Leaving the province

• About 2,200 people have had to leave Nova Scotia for medical procedures. The pro-

options for lung-transplant patients.

Marilyn, like many other Nova Scotians, has had to

posal will look at how long these people have to stay out of province.

go to Toronto to wait for a transplant. Nova Scotia does not have the facilities to do the operation.

Louis Brill, president of the Nova Scotia Lung Association, will be giving the minister a proposal to suggest how the association can work with the government to help pay the living expenses of those who have to relocate to Toronto for an extended period of time. The expenses can easily drain families of all their financial resources.

"They're not working for a year or two beforehand because of their disease, so they have very little opportunity to make money for a good period of time," says Brill.

"They also have to take

a caregiver or support person to Toronto. That person is usually a spouse, or a relative or the person they depend on to pay the bills."

Although it is too soon to have exact figures of how much the government will be able to contribute to the living expenses of Nova Scotians waiting in Toronto, Brill is confident that the amount will be modest and lower than people expect.

D'Entremont says that they will have a decision about the proposal likely no later than the end of December.

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'Urbanized' deer causing a rise in roadkill numbers

BIBLE HILL A growing population of "urbanized" deer are resulting in increasing numbers of roadkill, an official with the Department of Natural Resources says. "We've had them in the middle of the afternoon here in the forestry yard," said forest technician Jim McNaughton.

As of Tuesday, the department had recorded 256 road-killed deer in Colchester County since Jan. 1.

Last year saw a total of 230 deer killed by vehicles compared to 200 in 2006.

"It's an urban population of deer we've got and not a whole lot scares them anymore," he said, of the

fact that deer are becoming more accustomed to feeding near areas populated by humans.

In using the term urban, McNaughton was including Truro and other smaller outlying communities such as Brookfield, Debert, Bible Hill and Greenfield.

While there are some people who feed the deer they see hanging around their backyards, McNaughton said there's enough of a natural, easily accessible food supply through shrubbery and other growth that he doubts the feeding has much impact.

"They're just here. They've got no fear of people, they're content. There's not a lot you can do about it," he said. "And, yes, I know people feed them, but if they stopped

— would it help? Probably not, they would just get into the gardens."

NDP MLA Charlie Parker of Pictou, who is also the party's natural resources critic, believes that something can be done.

In the legislature this week, he called on Natural Resources Minister David Morse to initiate an awareness program, such as Manitoba does, to remind motorists of the danger of deer on the roads and what motorists can do to help prevent a collision.

"In Lunenburg, Colchester, Cumberland, Pictou and parts of Halifax County, it seems that if someone has-

n't hit a deer with a vehicle, they know someone who has," Parker said. "The number of deer involved in collisions on Nova Scotia roads has grown substantially. In the last eight years, there were nearly 15,000 collisions. These are all situations that can lead to serious injury or worse, however, the minister of Natural Resources chief response is to increase the deer bag limit."

Parker said the Manitoba government website provides information to motorists that warn them to be vigilant during dawn and dusk when deer like to feed. It also warns that deer travel together, so if one crosses, others are right behind and instructs drivers to place their lights on low beam if they spot a deer.

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Premier unplugged

Fiddling MacDonald touring province

Usually, when Premier Rodney MacDonald visits New Glasgow, he's on a political schedule.

Today, at North Nova Education Centre, the premier is coming with fiddle in hand for a fundraising event. And he's bringing a host of musicians with him.

MacDonald has four shows planned. The first was held in Halifax before today's in New Glasgow, Sunday's in Wolfville and next Friday in Liverpool.

"I'm really looking forward to the opportunity to play a few tunes, have the opportunity to have some great musicians take part in the ceilidh series — really looking forward to raise some money for what is a

great organization, the IWK," MacDonald said.

It's been on his mind for the last few years, he said. "I raised the idea with some of my fellow musicians and some of the people I work with. We approached the IWK to see if they would be interested in it."

MacDonald says he has a personal connection with the hospital: "My wife spent three months at the Grace IWK before we had our son. And I have other connections with respect to (prematurely born babies), as well. I can appreciate many sides of the issue for what parents go through, and I wanted to find a way to give back for what my family received." **NEW GLASGOW NEWS**

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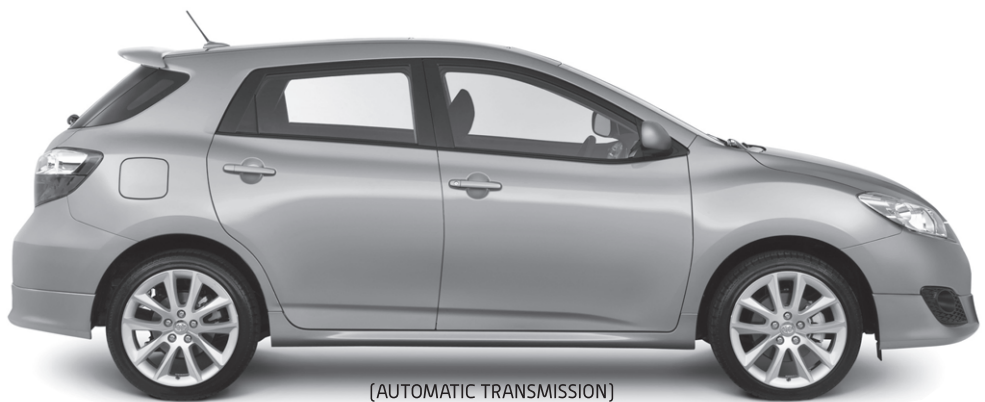
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12

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Ontario looks to curb cigarillo use

Canada

Tories to be toppled?

Opposition outraged over latest proposals

A political standoff that could spark an election has erupted as opposition politicians rejected a Conservative fiscal package that delays help for the struggling economy and proposes to eliminate public funding for political parties.

Liberals, New Democrats and the Bloc Québécois united in opposition yesterday to what they called a "mean-spirited" Conservative plan that also includes a clampdown on MPs' pay and a ban on strikes by federal government workers for two years.

Last night, a sense of urgency prevailed as emboldened opposition politicians openly mused about forming a coalition government. NDP Leader Jack Layton cancelled a trip to Vancouver so he could be in Ottawa today to talk strategy with other opposition leaders.

Barring a compromise,



Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, left, shakes hands with Prime Minister Stephen Harper after delivering the government's fiscal update in the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

the minority Conservatives could be toppled in a confidence vote on Monday night, opening the way to a change of government or a snap election less than two months after the Oct. 14 vote. Opposition MPs said they'll decide their next steps after seeing the legislation that will accom-

pany the fiscal update. The politicians will get their first peek at that today with a vote scheduled Monday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Watch highlights from the Tories' fiscal update at metronews.ca/canada

News in brief

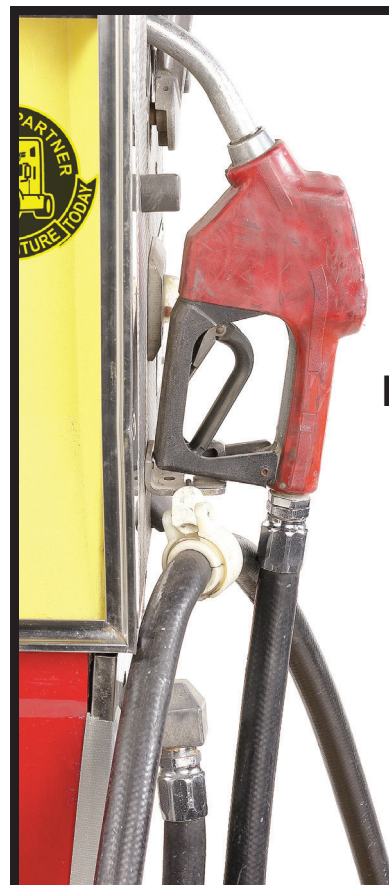
HAWKING Internationally renowned physicist Stephen Hawking has accepted a post of distinguished research chair at the Perimeter Institute for

Theoretical Physics in Waterloo, Ont.

COLLAPSE The Quebec government says it sent a memo two years ago to building owners,

warning of the potential for the same type of parking lot collapse that killed a Montreal man Wednesday.

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Verdict in hockey-coach trial expected today

The judge in the David Frost trial is set to deliver his verdict today after allegations that the former hockey coach organized group sex with his young players and their girlfriends. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

canada13

Big-spending MPs face funding halt

The federal government will crack down on high-flying ministers, aides and public servants who spend too much taxpayer money on trips and hospitality.

"We are directing government ministers and deputy ministers from every single department and agency of the government to rein in their spending on travel, hospitality, conferences, exchanges and pro-

fessional services," Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said in his economic update yesterday.

Investigation

- This plan comes on the heels of an investigation published last weekend that detailed numerous examples of ministers travelling overseas at first-class prices in large entourages — the \$84,000 trip to last year's WTO talks topping the list.

save money by managing spending.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Controversy Cystic fibrosis rally



Carleton University student Marissa Hoftiezer, 24, participated in an on-campus fundraiser for the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in Ottawa yesterday. Hoftiezer, whose sister, Becky has CF, was horrified when a school group announced earlier this week that a major fundraiser for CF, Shinerama, was being cut.

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An eight-year-old German schoolboy who wanted to complain to his mother about being sent out of class took his teacher's car and crashed it, police said. The boy stole the 40-year-old teacher's car key when she was not looking and managed to start up her compact car, accelerating and putting the vehicle into first gear. **REUTERS**

World



Subways to be used as housing

Ten Beijing subway trains that were phased out ahead of the Olympics will be used as makeshift housing over the winter for around 1,200 victims of May's devastating earthquake, local media said yesterday. A total of 60 subway cars are being retrofitted with bunk beds to house residents of Guangyuan, Sichuan province, said the Beijing Youth Daily.

REUTERS

Mumbai attackers a mystery

PERPETRATORS Al-Qaida. Pakistani jihadis.

An offshoot of the banned Students Islamic Movement of India.

Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate.

As Indian intelligence agencies scrambled yesterday to identify the perpetrators of Wednesday's terrorist attacks in Mumbai, terrorism experts said the Deccan Mujahideen, the group that claimed responsibility for the attack, was likely a name invented by the real perpetrator to sow confusion. That perpetrator, they said, could be any of several disparate organizations — possibly inside India, possibly outside.

Tom Quiggin, a Canadian expert in jihad who has studied terrorism in India, said he would "bet a year's pay" the terrorists belong to the Indian Mujahideen, an offshoot of the outlawed Students Islamic Movement of India. The IM has credibly claimed responsibility for several multiple-bomb attacks in India in 2007 and 2008, and several other international experts identified the group as the most likely to have orchestrated the co-ordinated Mumbai assaults.

"It's consistent with their methodology, consistent with their past, and it's also consistent in that there's nobody else in India who's ever carried out an attack like this before," Quiggin said. "There's no indication there's another group that would have this type of capability and invention."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Thai protestors expecting a battle

AIRPORTS Protesters laying siege to Bangkok's two airports braced for a battle with security forces yesterday after Thailand's prime minister declared a state of emergency to end a blockade threatening to cripple the economy.

People's Alliance of Democracy "security guards," armed with sticks and metal bars, manned a series of makeshift fortified roadblocks on the expressway leading to the capital's \$4-billion US Suvarnabhumi airport.

REUTERS

India looks for answers

Officials say several terrorists were captured alive

India remains on high alert today as investigators, joined by terrorism experts from around the world, strive to learn more about the shadowy group of terrorists who attacked a series of symbolic, high-profile targets in the country's financial capital of Mumbai.

The gunmen, identified by officials as suspected Muslim militants, attacked five-star hotels the Taj Mahal and Trident-Oberoi, along with the headquarters of an ultra-orthodox Jewish outreach group, Chabad Lubavitch, and a railway station.

Several terrorists were captured alive, according to Indian officials.

India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh blamed "external" forces — code for Pakistani militants — for the violence.

But Pakistan's government, which condemned the attacks, warned India against jumping to conclusions about who was responsible.

Survivors and witnesses say the gunmen went around specifically looking for American and British citizens in the attacks, which at last word claimed 121 lives and left 279 injured, including several Canadians.

"They have AK-47s and grenades," said local military commander Maj. Gen. R.K. Hooda. "They have bags full of grenades and have come fully prepared."

During the day commandoes brought hostages,



Schoolchildren hold candles during a vigil yesterday held in memory of the victims of Wednesday's shootings in Mumbai, India's financial capital.

trapped guests and corpses out of the hotels in small groups while fires erupted periodically and firefighters braved bullets to battle the flames.

Last night a team of FBI bomb and

forensics experts left Los Angeles for Mumbai to help with the investigation, even as analysts around the world

were debating whether the gunmen — described as young and ordinary — could have been linked to al-Qaida.

"It's clear that it is al-Qaida style," said Rohan Gunaratna of the International Center for Political Violence and Terrorism Research in Singapore and author of the book Inside Al-Qaida.

"Yesterday's attack is a watershed because, for the first time, the terrorists deliberately attacked international targets," Gunaratna said.

Singh, speaking to the nation, said "the well-planned and well-orchestrated attacks, probably with external linkages, were intended to create a sense of panic, by choosing high-profile targets" and indiscriminately killing foreigners.

But, the Indian prime minister warned, the terrorists "would not succeed in their nefarious design."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Leaked Sarkozy notes raise scandal

CZECH "Do you know what it means to be alone against all Arabs? To have them on the phone? Arabs are terrible, I assure you." Those words of French President Nicolas Sarkozy to the Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek have caused a big scandal in Czech Republic.

Yesterday, Czech weekly Reflex published leaked notes from a meeting between both diplomats in Paris on Oct. 31. According to the magazine, Sarkozy wanted to persuade the

Czech prime minister not to lead Union Pour la Méditerranée during the Czech EU presidency that starts in January 2009.

The whole scandal could be caused by mistranslation. The French meaning of the sentence "ils sont terribles" does not have the same negative meaning as in Czech, and translates as something more like "they are quiet something."

The editor-in-chief of Reflex, Pavel Safr, said the magazine got the material from "higher diplomatic

circles and from a person nobody could question as to whether the material is falsified."

Yesterday afternoon, Czech Foreign Affairs minister Karel Schwarzenberg officially apologized to Sarkozy for the leak.

Franck Louvier, Sarkozy's press officer, said to Metro: "I knew the story, it's a complete lie. I don't understand who made it up, but I guess it's from someone who wants to create prejudice against France."

METRO WORLD NEWS

News in brief

ADOPTION A Belgian baby bought over the Internet for adoption by a Dutch couple must be placed in the temporary care of the Dutch authorities, a court ruled yesterday.

CRASH An Air New Zealand Airbus A320 on a test flight crashed into the sea off France's southwest coast yesterday, killing at least two people with another five still missing.

IRAN U.N. human-rights investigators called on Iran yesterday to end what they called a "crack-down" on women's rights activists.

REUTERS

The lucky ones

Mumbai survivors speak

• Archit Guha is counting his blessings.

The Mumbai student and a group of his pals had planned on going to the Leopold Café on Wednesday night for a friend's birthday. Instead, they decided to go on Saturday night.

"As luck would have it, we decided not to go out," Guha, 18, said yesterday. "It's spine-chilling." Guha says the most disturbing aspect of the terrorist attacks was the apparent youth of many of the attackers.

"It means people in my age group are falling prey to fanaticism, to the ideology of terror that they're willing to espouse at any cost," he said.

• Pearl Shah was stranded in a bar until 5 a.m. yesterday, but she's happy just to be alive.

She was with a friend at a restaurant-bar located next to the Taj Mahal Palace hotel. The two were having dinner when they first heard about the shootings.

"We were told no one could enter or leave," said Shah, who then heard bursts of gunfire. "It was so close. I was terrified for a few minutes. This is one of the saddest days of my life."

• Jaspreet Singh's friend, Karan Katyal, a chef at the Oberoi Hotel, had just narrowly escaped death.

According to Singh, Katyal was in the kitchen when he heard the first gunshots. When he came out to check what was happening, the gunmen turned their weapons Katyal's way.

"He was pulled back in the nick of time and somehow managed to avoid getting shot," Singh related from his home, a mere 15 minutes from the hotel. "He ran to the back and waited four hours before being rescued."

• Neeraj Patel counts himself lucky. Very lucky.

The businessman left Leopold Café minutes before gunmen burst in and started firing at the patrons.

He was less than a 100 metres away when he heard what he thought were firecrackers. Seconds later, he heard an explosion followed by screams and he knew something was very wrong.

A friend told Patel later he had gone to the washroom when he heard the commotion and sneaked out the back.

"That probably saved his life," said Patel. "I just hope my other friend is okay."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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U.S. soldier seeks asylum

A U.S. soldier who deserted his unit to avoid returning to Iraq has applied for asylum in Germany, saying the Iraq war was illegal and that he could not support the "heinous acts" taking place.

Andre Shepherd, 31, who served in Iraq between September 2004 and February 2005 as an Apache helicopter mechanic in the 412th Aviation Support Battalion, has been living in Germany since deserting last year.

"When I read and heard about people being ripped to shreds from machine guns or being blown to bits by the Hellfire mis-

siles, I began to feel ashamed about what I was doing," Shepherd said during a news conference.

According to U.S. law, soldiers who desert during a time of war can face the death penalty.

The soldier said he was particularly hopeful he would be granted asylum in Germany, a staunch opponent of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

Shepherd, who enlisted in January 2004, is only the second U.S. soldier to have applied to Germany for asylum in a similar situation. The earlier application was later withdrawn.

REUTERS

Jordan Group wedding



A couple dance during a mass wedding in Amman yesterday. Four pairs of physically disabled couples celebrated their wedding in a ceremony organized by the Jordanian Society for People with Special Needs.

Two dead in Taliban strike

HELMAND Two British soldiers were killed in a Taliban attack in southern Afghanistan yesterday, the Ministry of Defence said.

The two Royal Marines were on foot patrol in Helmand province, a volatile region of Afghanistan, when they came under attack from a group of insurgents.

"The loss of these two

Royal Marines has come as a bitter and tragic blow to everyone in Task Force Helmand," a military spokesman said in a statement.

The deaths raise the number of British troops killed in the conflict since it began in late 2001 to at least 128, according to Ministry of Defence figures.

REUTERS

News in brief

SCAM China has executed the leader of a bogus scheme for breeding ants to make aphrodisiacs that conned investors out of 3 billion yuan (\$439 million US), the country's official news agency said yesterday. Wang Zhendong was executed on Wednesday.

IRAN A man who blinded a woman with acid after she spurned his marriage proposals will also be blinded with acid under Iran's Islamic law. The ruling was made on Wednesday based on the system of "qisas," or fair retribution.

REUTERS

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16 world

Hopping-mad judge delivers prison terms

Three men were jailed after being charged with contempt of court for showing up at Singapore's Supreme Court in T-shirts depicting kangaroos. **REUTERS**

Suspected bombers freed

Three German intelligence agents arrested in Kosovo on suspicion of throwing explosives at an EU office will be released and will return home today, a German newspaper said.

The Sueddeutsche Zeitung, citing government officials in Pristina, said in an early issue of its edition today that the three would be released for lack of evi-

dence.

Earlier, Thomas Oppermann, who chairs the German parliamentary committee overseeing intelligence operations, said the government had informed the committee the three worked for Germany's BND intelligence agency. He declined to say what their assignment had been.

"We don't have any indi-

cation that the three German officials in Kosovo had any connection to the attack," said Oppermann.

The explosive charge was thrown on Nov. 14 at the International Civilian Office, the office of EU Special Representative Pieter Feith, who oversees Kosovo's governance. It caused only minor damage.

REUTERS

Thanksgiving To a safe trip home



Space Shuttle Endeavour astronauts Don Pettit, left, and Stephen Bowen make a Thanksgiving toast aboard the International Space Station yesterday.

News in brief

PEACE TALKS Iran would welcome talks between President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and U.S. president-elect Barack Obama, the country's vice-president said in an interview with Japan's Kyodo news agency. Vice-President Esfandiar Rahim Mashaie said that any such meeting must be held in an open manner and its contents made public, the agency said. Mashaie said the Iranian president had said "direct diplomacy is the best way to peace," but added that Obama must distance himself from Washington's stance so far in order to implement change. Iran has repeatedly refused to bow to Western pressure to halt its nuclear program.

REUTERS

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Comment & Views

Comment

What world in 2009?

OmniVision

Rick McGinnis

rick.mcginis@metronews.ca

Back before too much work and parenting-induced penury reduced both free time and spare cash, I used to read at least 40 magazines a month. Everything from fluffy lifestyle mags to foreign policy journals, they were the meat of my regular reading, much more so than newspapers. These days, there's a scant few I pick up regularly, and most of these end up barely scanned before ending up in a bin in the living room, waiting for those leisurely weekends that won't come until my daughters are in college.

One of the few remaining titles I pick up regularly is The Economist's

The (Economist's The World In) 2008 issue predicted that 'record rates of mortgage defaults and repossessions will be the most visible symbol of a deepening housing bust,' an oraculation that can be faulted not so much for its accuracy as its timidity.

glossy annual exercise in prognostication, and this year's edition — the authoritatively-titled The World In 2009 — hit the newsstands this week. Like its predecessors, it's thick with essays, all confidently delivered, telling us to expect more bad economic news in the year to come, with global workforces shrinking with age, Iran edging ever closer to a nuclear bomb, and luxury brands taking a beating. This year's special section is devoted to the environment; last year's was focused on China. It'll get picked at for the next month or so, after which it'll end up on a shelf, next to The World In 2008,

2007, 2006 and so on.

I hold on to these issues as keepsakes of the conventional wisdom, collected and codified on the eve of the largely arbitrary turnover of another calendar year, since they often prove to be poor almanacs for the year to come. According to The World In 2008 for instance, Hillary Clinton was the likely bet to lead the Democrats into the White House, since "both Mr. Obama and Mr. Edwards come across as too lightweight." Time, of course, may prove if even a wrong prediction might still contain a kernel of insight.

The 2008 issue predicted that "record rates of mortgage defaults and reposses-

sions will be the most visible symbol of a deepening housing bust," an oraculation that can be faulted not so much for its accuracy as its timidity. The 2004 issue contained an optimistic note on Paul Martin's imminent move into the Prime Minister's office, predicting that his tenure in office would benefit from "political continuity; balanced budgets; strong economic growth: where's the catch?" It seems so long ago now.

There's barely a mention of terrorism in The World In 2001, which set the tone for that year with an editorial essay summing up the economic bounty we could expect in the year to come: "Nerve-wracking it may be, but this is surely a golden age," wrote Clive Crook, the magazine's deputy editor. Nerve-wracking it was — little did you know, Mr. Crook.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

CONSERVATIVES TO AXE SUBSIDIES TO POLITICAL PARTIES:



MICHAEL DE ADOR

Letters

Premier's decision on finances frustrating

Personally, I am beginning to become a little frustrated with our provincial government. With nearly a month until the scheduled financial-report date, we have the only Canadian premier who refuses to bump up his or her financial report.

We could only hope that during one of the more severe recessions that we have experienced, Mr. (Rodney) MacDonald would be a little more prudent in his actions. Is it too much to ask that our premier provide us with the information we require?

CHRIS A JOHNSTON
HALIFAX

Hells Angels prosecutions are a human-rights issue

The Hell Angels motorcycle club is not a criminal organization and deserve the same rights as any other person.

In March this year, a landmark ruling by a B.C. judge said that "a full-patch Hells Angels member and two of his associates are not members of a criminal organization." The trial was a key test of new "federal anti-gang leg-

islation," and if the Hells Angels were deemed a criminal organization, police would have been able to seize their assets.

There are so many urban legends around the Hells Angels, all perpetrated by law enforcement and eaten up by the public. They are an easy target. It is not fair that a "select few" have rights violated.

A recent decision in Alberta has some legal experts saying publicly that it could eventually place limits on the way police try to control the movement of "biker gangs."

I maintain that these cases revolve around fundamental rights that all citizens are entitled to, whether they drive motorcycles or not.

WILLIAM PERRY,
VICTORIA, B.C.

Views

Council not anti-development



Bob Harvey

Recent public comments which flowed from council's decision not to approve the Waterside Centre development application have caused me some concern.

Councillors are elected to be decision makers. It's not the role of a councillor to blindly accept, in an uncritical way, development proposals and the recommendations made by municipal staff. It is certainly not council's role, as Stephen Lund, of Nova Scotia Business Inc. would have it, to "support development or get out of the way." If it were just a matter of applying planning policies and laws which re-

quired no interpretation, there would be no need of councils, courts or appeal boards — or for that matter, more than one lawyer in town who can read.

The fact that 18 councillors were evenly divided on this issue indicates, to me, that there were two reasonable conclusions reached by reasonable people. It will now be up to the Nova Scotia Utility And Review Board to decide if council's decision was reasonable.

Where is the proof that council has been anti-development? It wasn't many months ago that council, having approved the Trillium project, the Alexander Tower and Kings Wharf, was accused of approving any project that came before it. There is at least one office tower in the downtown that has been approved for thirty years.

It's not the role of a councillor to blindly accept, in an uncritical way, development proposals.

Ground has yet to be broken. Where is the private sector in this great need for Class A office space for the world financial sector that is poised to locate here?

For me, the proposed Waterside development dominated and overpowered the existing heritage block of buildings.

I share Premier Rodney MacDonald's concern about the loss of the former Sweet Basil restaurant building. But rather than have his government intervene in an unprecedented way, the province should

offer to partner with the Armour Group and the municipality to restore and rehabilitate this block, to new uses, preserving this unique collection of heritage buildings central to the historic character of our downtown.

It's a downtown character which is central to the success of our province's billion-dollar tourist industry. This block of buildings between Hollis and Upper Water Streets represents an integral link to that collection of buildings we are proud to call Historic Properties.

These buildings represent strategic built heritage infrastructure. Let's treat them that way. It's just good business.

Councillor Bob Harvey is a former deputy mayor of HRM and a municipal councillor since 1989.

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: halifaxletters@metronews.ca

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Burlington, Ont., Hyundai is offering a minivan at full price, plus a subcompact car for free today and Saturday. The general manager of the lot said the offer "pulls us out of the herd" and spurs auto sales before they plunge as expected. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

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PUBLIC CONSULTATION

There will be a public consultation session for a new interchange on Highway 102 (Bicentennial Highway) at Larry Uteck Boulevard, between Kearney Lake Road (Exit 2) and Hammonds Plains Road (Exit 3). **A recommended layout has been developed and will be presented at the session.** Staff from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and the Halifax Regional Municipality will be available to answer questions.

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Hungry U.S. retailers lure in Canadians with big sales

With U.S. consumers in a funk, retailers south of the border have stepped up efforts to lure Canadians into their stores and websites today for "Black Friday," the busiest shopping days on the American calendar.

But they could be in for a tough fight. Canadian retailers are striking back with deeper discounts, longer store hours and new catchphrases such as The Brick's "Red Day," to instill thoughts of U.S.-style Thanksgiving savings in consumers' minds.

"Maybe we can get some Canadians to come in and spend some money."

Darrel Ryce

Some Canadian retailers, such as Sears, are even going so far as to say they're offering Boxing Day-style savings this weekend.

Darrel Ryce with The NPD Group has noticed Canadian retailers making an effort to hold onto their cus-

tomers. "I think a lot of it has to do with getting the dollar out of that person's wallet now, before they spend it somewhere else."

On the U.S. side, where retail sales have fallen dramatically in recent months, mall owners were offering free \$20 US gift certificates, or advertising U.S. Thanks-giving deals in Canadian newspapers.

"If Americans are not going to spend as much, maybe we can get some Canadians to come in and spend some money," Ryce notes. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Loblaws to charge for plastic bags

GROCERY Loblaw Co. said yesterday that it will start charging customers a five-cent fee for every plastic shopping bag they use.

The company said it would begin charging customers on April 22, 2009, which is Earth Day.

The company said it would also encourage customers to use alternatives to plastic bags and en-

hance its offer of affordable reusable-bag options. Loblaw currently offers reusable fabric bags to its customers for a small fee.

Loblaw's move comes just days before city council in Toronto debates passing a controversial bylaw to put a surcharge of 5 Canadian cents on all plastic shopping bags used in the city. **REUTERS**

In brief

LAYOFFS The Canadian unit of Citigroup is cutting 12 investment banking jobs as the New York-based company sheds thousands of jobs worldwide. **REUTERS**

MERGER With the \$52-billion US deal to buy BCE stalled, investors again raised the idea of merging Bell Canada with Telus Corp. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

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Attacks postpone cricket matches

International cricket in India will go into recess for at least two weeks in the wake of terror attacks in Mumbai.

England and India officials agreed in an emergency meeting yesterday to postpone the last two matches of their international series. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

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Sports



'We're talking about practice, man'

Allen Iverson missed a mandatory Detroit Pistons practice on U.S. Thanksgiving yesterday, and will be fined by the team, coach Michael Curry said. In May 2002, the then-Philadelphia 76er Iverson launched into a famous rant during a news conference, responding to criticism he had taken for missing several practices. Curry also added Iverson will not start tonight against Milwaukee.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Senators take shootout win

NHL RESULT

Leafs 1 Sens 2 (SO)



MIKE BEASLEY
for Metro Canada

THE SKINNY: The Battle of Ontario added another chapter to its ongoing saga last night at Scotiabank Place in Ottawa as the Senators edged the Toronto Maple Leafs in a shootout.

THE WINNER: Daniel Alfredsson beat Leafs goalie Vesa Toskala with a quick shot over the netminder's glove hand in the shootout for the win.



Ottawa's Jason Spezza dekes around Toronto's Jeff Finger last night at Scotiabank Place. The Senators ended up beating the Maple Leafs 2-1 in a shootout.

THE QUOTE: "We haven't had much luck in shootouts ...

so it's a big bonus to win like we did," said Alfredsson.

THE FIRST TWO TALLIES: Ottawa's Mike Fisher and the

Leafs Nikolai Kulemin traded goals 59 seconds apart in the first five minutes of the opening period. That was the goal scoring for the game until Alfredsson notched the winner.

THE RIVALRY: Both teams left everything on the ice last night as they pounded each other for the entire 65 minutes, combining for over 50 hits. The game even featured a spirited second period dust-up between Toronto forward Dominic Moore and Sens blue-liner Jason Smith.

MILESTONE FOR TOSKALA: Toronto's Finnish-born goalie made 34 saves last night in regulation and overtime as he played in his 200th NHL career game and 85th as a member of the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Burke officially joins Leafs

NHL Brian Burke has signed a contract with the Maple Leafs that will have the former Anaheim GM take over as Toronto's president and general manager. The deal will reportedly pay Burke US\$18 million over six years.

Cowboys, Titans, Eagles all win big

NFL Tony Romo threw three touchdowns as the Dallas Cowboys destroyed the Seattle Seahawks, 34-9 in U.S. Thanksgiving Day action yesterday. Romo went 22-for-34 with 331 yards for the Cowboys (8-4), who have won three straight. In Detroit, Tennessee crushed the Lions 47-10. Chris Johnson racked up 125 yards while LenDale White gained 106 yards for the Titans, who dropped Detroit to 0-12 on the year. In Philadelphia, the Eagles pounded the Arizona Cardinals 48-20, with Donovan McNabb throwing four touchdown passes and Brian Westbrook tying a team record with four scores. McNabb had been benched a week ago.



Romo

Kobe more of a 'we-we' player these days

Obscured by the fact that the Los Angeles Lakers have catapulted to a remarkable, NBA-best 12-1 start is Kobe Bryant's slump.

Yep, production by the Lakers' marquee player is down across the board. Yet the Lakers are winning, and usually by huge margins.

"Kobe seems to understand now that if it's not his night, he has to help the other guys play well," Lakers coach Phil Jackson told me yesterday. "He's become more of a we-we guy and less of a me-me guy."

Quarterback Michael Vick, completing his sentence for mistreating dogs, is keeping in first-rate shape in prison and plans to for-

YorkReport

Marty York

marty.york@metronews.ca

mally apply soon for reinstatement with the NFL and the Atlanta Falcons.

The Falcons, however, don't want him back and there's widespread speculation that, despite his exceptional talents, NFL clubs will stay away from him.

Which raises the question: Could Vick wind up in the CFL?

"Anyone who wants Michael better be prepared to face the dog-lovers of America," Kansas City

Chiefs general manager Carl Peterson said. "There'll be a lot of problems. People love their pets, and particularly dogs. There'll be protests, people expressing their thoughts — even though he's served his time. And that goes for Canada, too."

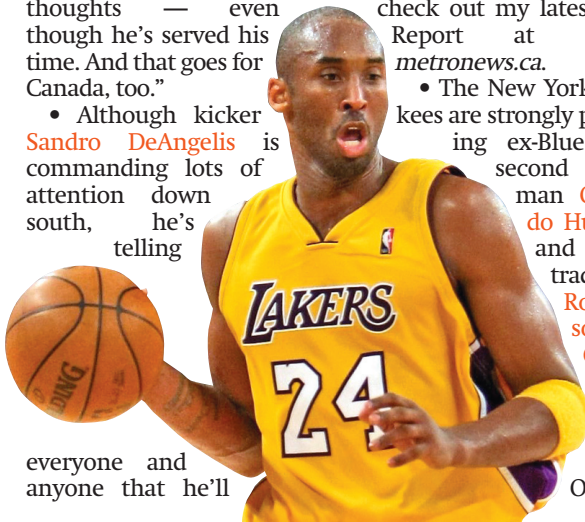
Although kicker Sandro DeAngelis is commanding lots of attention down south, he's telling

everyone and anyone that he'll

return to Calgary for his fifth year with the Stampeders unless he is guaranteed a respectable signing bonus from an NFL club.

For more on DeAngelis, check out my latest CFL Report at www.metronews.ca.

The New York Yankees are strongly pursuing ex-Blue Jays second baseman Orlando Hudson and will trade Robinson Cano if they sign the O-Dog.



And the world champion Philadelphia Phillies are about to re-sign 46-year-old pitcher Jamie Moyer.

A new offer for megabucks has been made to NHL free agent Mats Sundin, who likely will narrow his list of possibilities to three teams next week. He's eyeing a January return. Besides Tampa Bay, clubs pursuing him include the Toronto Maple Leafs, Ottawa Senators, Vancouver Canucks, Montreal Canadiens, Philadelphia Flyers, Chicago Blackhawks, New York Rangers, New York Islanders and Anaheim Ducks.

And I only have one word about the Leafs' decision to hire the irascible Brian Burke as club bossman: Why?

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Big roster move for Rainmen

PBL The Halifax Rainmen are making a "significant roster announcement" today, with a press conference scheduled for 1 p.m. at the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame.

The Rainmen, who make their debut in the Premier Basketball League in January, already have 12 players under contract and are hoping to open training camp on Tuesday with as many as 15 players vying for roster spots.

Competition is expected to be fierce. "Just because you're signed doesn't mean you're going to be here," Rainmen co-owner Andre Levingston said. "If someone else outplays you at training camp, you're gone."

The Rainmen will look to round out their camp roster on Monday, when they hold an open tryout at Citadel High.

MATTHEW WUEST, METRO HALIFAX

Sports in brief

HOCKEY The Saint Mary's Huskies won their sixth straight AUS men's hockey game last night in Charlottetown, defeating the P.E.I. Panthers 7-2. Conference scoring leader Marc Rancourt had two goals.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Arsenault's rink moves on

Defeats Jill Mouzar's rink in a rubber match of sorts at Sobey's Slam

You know how Nova Scotia is — everyone knows everyone through some weird connection, right?

Well, Jill Mouzar and Mary Anne Arsenault are connected by the curling rink. The Halifax skips have teammates that used to be teammates, and meet frequently on the provincial scene.

Yesterday, they crossed paths on the ice of John Brother MacDonald Stadium in New Glasgow at the World Curling Tour's Sobey's Slam. Both had earned first-draw victories.

After scoring one in the first end, Arsenault's rink stole two in the second end and never looked back, defeating Mouzar 6-3 to continue her march through the A bracket.

"Everything's going well right now," said Arsenault, a former world champion with Colleen Jones' rink.

"We know (Mouzar's) team pretty well, and it's always a good game. We

just made our shots and had the right draw weight today."

Arsenault and Mouzar had split two previous head-to-head matchups. While Arsenault won the rubber match of sorts, of more importance is her perfect 2-0 record. She also earned a 7-3 win over Alberta's Cathy King in the morning.

Arsenault meets Newfoundland and Labrador's Heather Strong today at noon for a spot in the bracket final. The winner there heads to Sunday's single-elimination quarterfinal.

Strong pulled off an upset to reach the contest, defeating current world champion Jennifer Jones 6-3.

"We're a new team, so I think it's a little bit lucky we were seeded where we were," Arsenault said of her rink's deceptive 26th-seed status. "(Against Mouzar), stealing two early



Halifax skip Jill Mouzar takes a shot at the Sobey's Slam women's curling event in New Glasgow yesterday. After posting an upset win in the morning, she lost 6-3 to Mary Anne Arsenault's rink, also of Halifax.

is always a tough thing to come back from. We just want to keep rolling because we've put ourselves in a good position."

Mouzar started the day off right by beating Alberta's Heather Rankin 7-6. She scored four in the

sixth end to turn the tide in that game, but the slow start against Arsenault proved a steep hill to climb.

"It's funny, because we were really excited to play in this area and get on the ice, and it didn't work out

for us," Mouzar conceded. "It's great ice to play on, and we can't wait to get another game on it."

Mouzar moves on to the B bracket, where she plays Suzanne Birt this morning.

ADAM RICHARDSON/
NEW GLASGOW NEWS



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Moose try to build on what they can

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

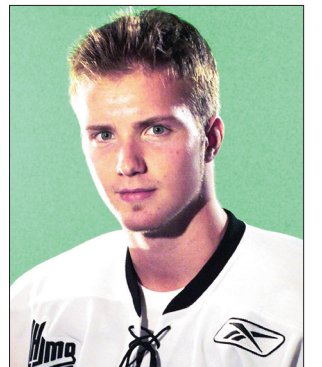
In the Halifax Mooseheads' world, even a shootout loss can classify as a momentum-builder.

Halifax, coming off a 5-4 shootout loss to the Saint John Sea Dogs, has three of a possible four points in its last two games, the closest thing all season to back-to-back wins.

After a brutal road trip and a seven-game losing streak, the Herd (8-18-2) is feeling good heading into a road contest Friday against the Moncton Wildcats (20-2-3) and a home tilt Sunday at 4 p.m. against the Bathurst Titan (11-13-6).

"Our confidence is pretty high right now and we're playing a lot better," said Mooseheads 19-year-old forward Yuri Cheremetiev. "I think there's a good chance we're going to win those games against Moncton and Bathurst."

The Mooseheads were thrilled to light up the Sea Dogs' stingy penalty-killing unit in Sunday's win, going 3-for-5. They've scored eight times in the



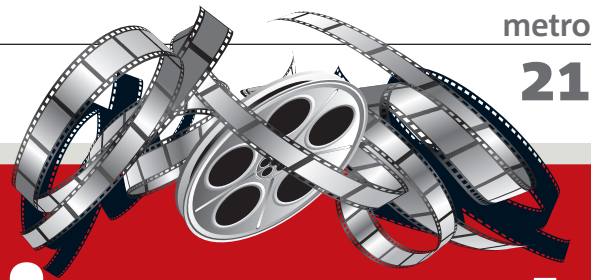
Yuri Cheremetiev says the Mooseheads' confidence is building.

past two games. They also continue to get production out of Cheremetiev's line with Tomas Knotek and Jessyko Bernard, a unit with 19 goals and 20 assists for 39 points in the past 10 games.

"Our offence is heating up right now," Cheremetiev said. "The more offence we get, the more chances of winning we get, so I think it's going to be a good stretch for us."

Moncton, which had the best start in QMJHL history at 18-0-2, is 2-2-1 the past five games but is still at the top of the Atlantic Division. Bathurst is third in the division.

Visit metronews.ca/movies to get showtimes, watch trailers and read reviews.



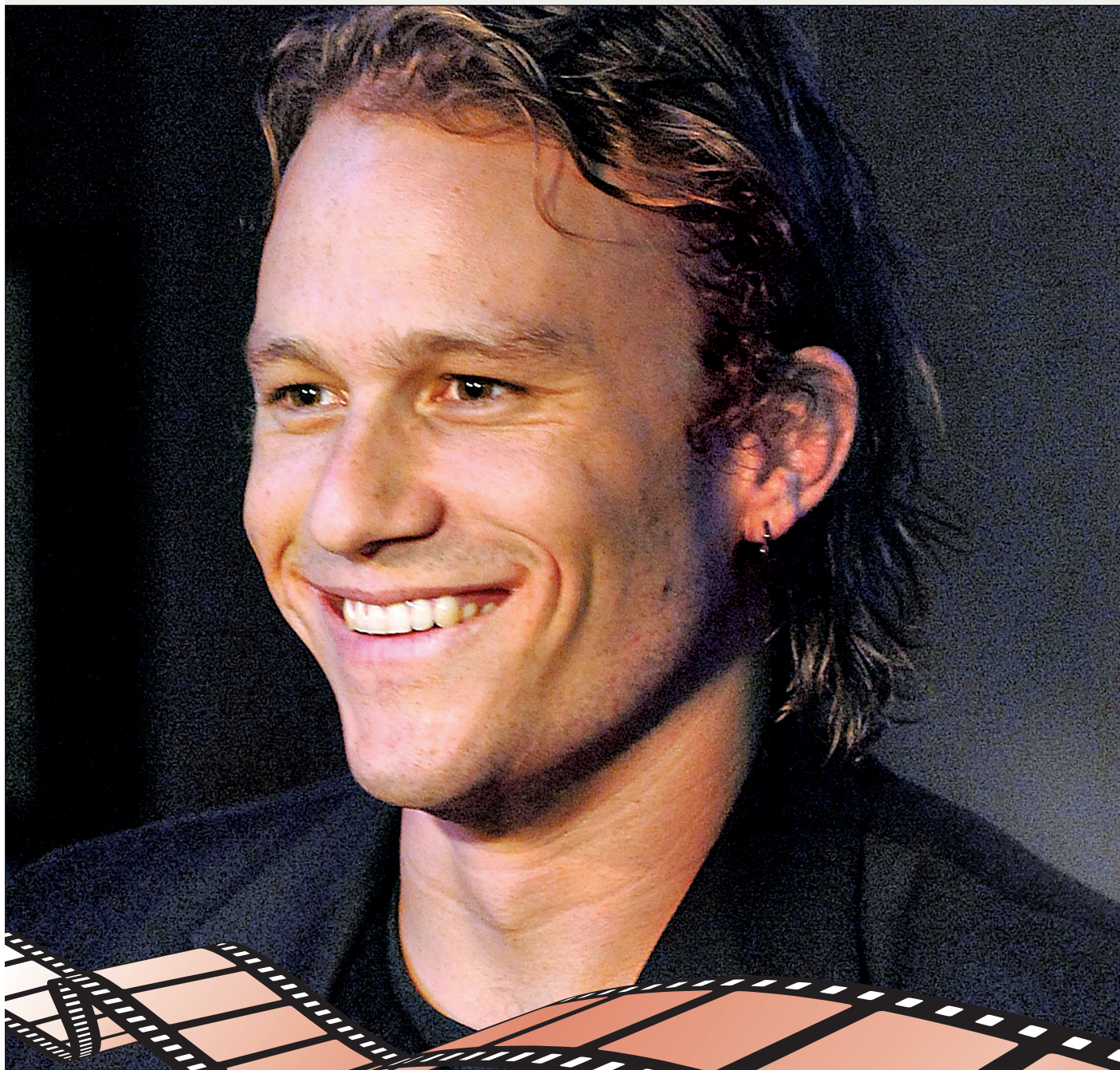
Movies & Entertainment

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA

Movies

I dream of Oscar

Pg 22



DARRYL JAMES/GETTY IMAGES

Metro's movie writers weigh in on the upcoming awards season for the top categories: Best actor, best actress, best director, best picture and a wild card — which some think may end up going to the late Heath Ledger.

movies

Pg 23



Actress finds herself in many rough and tough roles.

music

Pg 29



Metro columnist Alan Cross offers his own gift list.

television

Pg 26



Jason Priestley finally fulfills his lifelong dream — almost.

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Movies

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

And the nominees are ...

Metro takes a look at who deserves to win during the upcoming awards season

While most people are thinking about the holidays at this time of year, Hollywood is thinking about statues and accolades.

The annual award season is about to kick off, with Golden Globe nominations being handed down in mid-December, and Oscar predictions already being made.

Metro asked its movie reviewers — Richard Crouse, Steve Gow, Chris Alexander and Rick McGinnis — to weigh-in on who they think deserves props this year.

Best actress

CROUSE: Anne Hathaway's intense, unvarnished performance in Rachel Getting Married reveals the pain that lurks beneath the character's goth-like exterior. She's tough and fragile; someone who is able to live with past sins, but can't get over them. It's the award caliber performance she has hinted at before but never delivered.

ALEXANDER: Angelina Jolie for Changeling or Meryl Streep for Doubt. Good movies, and blistering per-

formances in both films.

MCGINNIS: If Kate Winslet gets nominated for both The Reader and Revolutionary Road, it's not hard to see how she won't blow past Keira Knightley or Nicole Kidman.

Best actor

ALEXANDER: It needs to go to my favorite underdog, Mickey Rourke, in The Wrestler. Will it? Maybe ... Hollywood loves comebacks. By that same token, I hold a special place in my heart for Jean-Claude Van Damme in JCVD. It won't happen but man was he good.

GOW: Frank Langella for Frost/Nixon. After winning the Tony Award for playing this role on Broadway, the 70-year-old screen legend is due to make his mark in cinema as well. Besides, with a film career that goes back 38 years, he's owed a statuette or two.

MCGINNIS: Playing gay is the way to go — just ask Tom Hanks — and Leonardo DiCaprio doesn't have a lot of love these days, so



Metro's movie reviewers think Frank Langella's portrayal of Richard Nixon in Frost/Nixon, left, and Anne Hathaway in Rachel Getting Married, right, are both deserving of awards this year.

let's call it for Sean Penn in Milk.

Best director

CROUSE: Slumdog Millionaire is Danny Boyle's most complex movie yet, encompassing everything from romance to action, comedy to anguish, treachery, greed and yes, even a musical number (stay through the credits). It's a wild ride featuring Boyle's hyper visual style, a pulsating musical score, and story elements that joyfully bind together Romeo and Juliet, Bollywood gangster pictures and a rowdy coming-of-age story.

GOW: Since only three films have won the best picture Oscar without

their directors being nominated, it's a given Danny Boyle will get a nod.

MCGINNIS: If Clint Eastwood hadn't announced that he was retiring from acting, it might be Sam Mendes. But the Academy is a sentimental beast, and might golf clap him to a third best director statue for Gran Torino or Changeling.

Best picture

CROUSE: WALL-E is the first art film for kids I have ever seen. The story of a lonely robot that inadvertently gives humankind a second chance is aimed at children but doesn't look like any other kid's movie you've seen. It's 2001: A



Slumdog Millionaire director Danny Boyle may win an award.

Space Odyssey for children.

ALEXANDER: The Dark Knight. Hands down. It works on almost every lev-

el and is the best American film of the year.

GOW: Slumdog Millionaire. This dark horse may surprise a few folks, but certainly not those who have seen it. Crowds have been going wild for it and if it can ride out the hype Slumdog may just sneak itself a few big fat awards. Hey, it worked for Crash a couple years ago.

Wild card

CROUSE: (best supporting actor) Heath Ledger's Joker in The Dark Knight is a super villain for the new millennium; a terrorist, more interested in creating chaos than in anything else. It's a bravura performance that sees the late actor working at the top of his game as he creates the definitive version of the character (sorry to any Cesar Romero fans who may disagree).

ALEXANDER: (best score) I'm a soundtrack junkie and the Hans Zimmer/James Newton Howard's music for The Dark Knight was just plain brilliant. Speaking of Zimmer, his work in Kung Fu Panda was really beautiful ... my son.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Columbia to adapt The Swap

Columbia Pictures has brought aboard the writing team of Tim and Tom Mullen to adapt Antony Moore's comedy novel *The Swap*, about an out-of-shape comic book dealer, for the big screen. **REUTERS**

Reel Time

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Politicians on film: 'Yes we can!'

InFocus

Richard Crouse

mrchaos33@hotmail.com

This year may go down in the history books as the year politics became hip again. Barack Obama's "Yes we can!" vigor reignited America's political passion, helping to break a forty-year-old Election Day turn-out record and actually get people under the age of seventy to tune into Meet the Press.

That excitement has infected Hollywood as well. This year sees three high profile political biographies hit theatres: *W.*, about the life and wild times of George W. Bush; the soon-to-be released *Frost/Nixon*; and this week's limited release *Milk*, starring Sean Penn as the first openly gay man elected to public office in the USA. Hollywood has often

looked to politics for inspiration. Anthony Hopkins's portrayal of rubber-cheeked Tricky Dicky in *Nixon* was nominated for a Best Actor Oscar, as was Raymond Massey's take on the 16th president in *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, and James Whitmore as Harry Truman in *Give 'em Hell, Harry*.

Wild in the Streets, a 1968 counter-culture cult film about Max Frost, a multi-millionaire rock star with plans to take over the government, is one of the wilder political "what-if" films.

Frost's scheme begins with staged riots on the Sunset Strip. Next he spikes Washington's drinking water supply with LSD and while D.C.'s powerbrokers are hallucinating he gets them to pass a law lowering the age limit for all elected offices to 14. Soon he wins the Oval Office, immediately imprisoning everyone over 30 in concentration camps where they wear dark robes and are perpetually stoned on LSD.

Max's plan just might

land him in trouble, however, when the next generation adopts the new slogan: "We're gonna put everybody over 10 out of business."

Seen through today's eyes the film is little more than a fun, druggy artifact from the freewheeling sixties, but at the time its message was taken seriously by some in the establishment. At 1968's Presidential Convention the Mayor of Chicago hired security to protect the city's water supply from being laced with LSD.

Other unconventional political films include *Whoops Apocalypse* which sees America's first female president, played by M*A*S*H's Loretta Swit, try to avoid World War III and 1964's *Kisses for My President* which focuses on the tough job of First Husband as he puts a masculine spin on the role of First Lady, hosting women's groups and garden parties.

Richard Crouse is the author of *Son of the 100 Best Movies You've Never Seen* and film critic for CTV's Canada AM.

Glutton for punishment

Julie Benz back in the boys zone in *Punisher: War Zone*

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada



Movie feature

Not only does Julie Benz play yin to a serial killer's yang in the hit TV show *Dexter*, but she also starred opposite the most macho of manly men earlier this year in *Rambo*. Now the soft-spoken actress is playing accomplice to yet another rugged he-man in *Punisher: War Zone* — hitting theatres next Friday.

"I seem to be getting vigilante themes surrounding me in my work," says Benz over the phone from New York recently. "It's because I'm so light in real life."

She may be joking but there isn't much to laugh about in *Punisher: War Zone*. Although it's the third cinematic adaptation of the vengeance-filled Marvel Comics character, Benz insists this is not a sequel — "It's just a very gritty urban retelling of the Punisher tale," she says.

"This is not just an action

film, this is a film about a man whose family was completely annihilated," says Benz of the Punisher's origin. "He takes on vigilante justice and is still struggling with the loss of his family so there's real heart to the role of Frank Castle (*The Punisher*)."

In *War Zone*, an evil mob boss that Castle (Ray Stevenson) left horribly disfigured forms a vengeful crime syndicate. When a cop's wife (Benz) and her child are kidnapped by the foe, the unpredictable Punisher must reluctantly rescue the pair.

"In *The Punisher*, my character's a lot tougher," says Benz. "She's a fighter and she's willing to do anything to save her daughter."

As if its legacy wasn't enough, *Punisher* is also gaining notice with filmmaker Lexi Alexander. Not only is the former kickboxing champion making her big studio debut, but many



Julie Benz in action film *Punisher: War Zone*.

say she's an unusual choice to helm such a movie.

"On many levels, (she's) very appropriate. I mean, she is a martial artist so when it came to the fight sequences — these sequences look like street fighting, not stunt fighting," defends Benz.

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Movie morsels

Australia

REVIEW Australia is a beautifully filmed study of a vast land that — as one character says — has “a strange power.” What director Baz Luhrmann should fret over is the drawn-out narrative that plays to melodramatic excess. Set during the outbreak of World War II, Australia features Nicole Kidman as Lady Ashley, widow of a mysteriously murdered cattle ranch owner. When confronted by her husband’s rival with a takeover bid, Ashley hires a maverick stockman (Hugh Jackman) and joins him on a massive cattle drive across the outback.

Bolt
REVIEW Essentially, this tale about the unyielding loyalty of canines is as charming and heart-tugging as any Disney movie out there. Even better, the film excels in skill, depth and maturity equaling that of Wall-E and Ratatouille. Not really surprising since Pixar’s brilliant chief John

Lasseter is now running Disney’s animation department as well.

Changeling

REVIEW Directed by legendary icon Clint Eastwood, Changeling tells the emotional journey of Christine Collins (Angelina Jolie), a single mother in 1920s Los Angeles who comes home to find her son missing. Following weeks of relentlessly searching, the police suddenly show up with her child, reporters in tow. Great. Only there’s a catch: It ain’t him.

Four Christmases

REVIEW Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon star as a professional couple who always avoid their families during. After the film’s worst plot contrivance traps them in the country and broadcasts their availability to their kin, the couple — Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon —



Australia stars Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman.

embark on their dreaded four Christmases. Sure, this is no future Christmas classic, but it will be a movie that you won’t angrily turn off when it starts airing on television during the holidays.

High School Musical 3: Senior Year

REVIEW It’s very likely that only a handful of adults

have seen the previous two High School Musical incarnations that follow the dancing and singing students of Albuquerque’s Eastside High. Adults can actually attend the movie without too much fear. Sure, the storyline is very basic, and squeaky Mickey Mouse-clean — you may doze off occasionally — but there is great energy in this film.

Quantum of Solace

REVIEW The movie starts literally minutes after its predecessor, Casino Royale, ended, with a pre-credit car chase that sums up director Marc Forster’s brisk approach to the story. Action scenes are the meat of Bond movies. Most of what we see in Quantum of Solace is at least as good as the standards set in previous films; relentless, and more than a bit improbable. Daniel Craig’s JamesBond is still an excellent incarnation of the character.

Transporter 3

REVIEW The latest entry in the lucrative but critically maligned franchise, simply called Transporter 3, and once more pits an iron jawed, black belt-sporting mercenary driver Frank Martin against a cabal of greasy, well tailored international baddies. And while the film boasts the same clunky narrative

problems and distractingly dubbed European actors as the first two installments, I’m happy to report that the breathlessly-paced Transporter makes amends by delivering some of the most delirious action set pieces of this year.

Twilight

REVIEW Kristin Stewart stars as Bella, a young girl who moves to a small town and becomes instantly captivated by a classmate named Edward (Robert Pattinson) who is part of a very peculiar and insular family known as the Cullens. As Bella becomes more attracted to Edward, she discovers that the Cullens are a clan of vampires ... but very safe emo-vampires who only drink animal blood and spend of most of their time silently emoting and looking pretty rather than preying on helpless victims. Thus begins an epic tale of forbidden love that has made the hearts of millions of teenage girls swoon.

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High School Musical 3: Senior Year (G) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:20
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Mon 1:40-4-7-9:20 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Tue 1:40-4-9:20 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 1:40-4-7-9:20
Quantum of Solace (14) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Sun 12:45-1:15-3:30-3:50-6:45-7:15-9:30-9:55 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 12:45-1:15-3:30-3:50-7:15-9:30-9:55 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 12:45-1:15-3:30-3:50-6:45-7:15-9:30-9:55
Rachel Getting Married (14) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 3:55-7:10-9:45
Role Models (14) Dolby Stereo Fri-Thu 1:10-3:40-7:15-9:45
Transporter 3 (14) Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:20-1:40-3:45-4:10-6:50-7:10-9:15-9:45
Twilight (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Sun 12:45-1:15-3:45-4:15-6:45-7:9:45-10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 12:45-1:15-3:45-4:15-6:45-7:9:45-10

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Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa: The IMAX Experience (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:15-3:45-7:15-9:30

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Australia (PG) No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:30-4-7:30 No Passes, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 4-7:30
Bolt (G) Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:50-3:10-7-9:15 Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:10-7-9:15
Four Christmases (PG) Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1:10-3:40-6:50-9 Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:40-6:50-9
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1:10-3:30-7:10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:30-7:10
National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (STC) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 7
Quantum of Solace (14) Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1:30-4:10-7:20-9:50 Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 4:10-7:20-9:50
Role Models (14) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1-3:45-6:30-9:30 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Mon-Wed 3:45-6:30-9:30 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 3:45-9:30
Transporter 3 (14) Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1:20-3:50-6:40-9:20 Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:50-6:40-9:20
Twilight (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Thu 9:40 No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:40-3:20-6:20-9:10 No Passes, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:20-6:20-9:10



Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson in a scene from Twilight, which is currently in theatres.

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Bolt (G) Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri 7-9:10 Stadium Seating, No Passes Sat-Sun

12:45-3-7-9:10 Stadium Seating, No Passes Mon-Thu 7-9:10
Four Christmases (PG) Stadium Seating Fri 6:45-9 Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 12:45-3-6:45-9 Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 6:45-9
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Stadium Seating Fri 6:30-8:50 Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 1-3:15-6:30-8:50 Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 6:30-8:50
Quantum of Solace (14) Stadium Seating Fri 7-9:30 Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 1-3:45-7-9:30 Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 7-

9:30
Transporter 3 (14) Stadium Seating Fri 7:10-9:30 Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 1:15-3:45-7:10-9:30 Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 7:10-9:30
Twilight (PG) Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri 6:30-9:15 Stadium Seating, No Passes Sat-Sun 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:15 Stadium Seating, No Passes Mon-Thu 6:30-9:15

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Television

TV writers look to economy for ideas

TRENDS Working-class men and women may soon steal Hollywood's spotlight from the not-so-desperate housewives of upscale Wisteria Lane as U.S. television writers consider how to appeal to viewers in tough economic times.

The buzz around Hollywood is that shows portraying over-the-top wealth like ABC's flashy *Dirty Sexy Money* are on their way out. Writers believe the time is again ripe for working class comedies like 1980s sitcom *Roseanne* and 1970s blockbuster *All in the Family*.

"Many TV shows portray wealthy people and opulence, and I think these kinds of shows may have a problem with viewership. I think audiences want to see characters they can relate to," said Suzan Olson Davis, who has written for cop drama *Saving Grace*. Davis said she is now working on a pilot program for a series about the "lower middle class."

Paul Kagan of media research firm PK said viewers will increasingly turn to gritty crime dramas like *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, citing the wildly popular 1930s Depression-era radio classic *The Shadow*, about a mysterious vigilante.

"During a time of great problems, people like to see problems solved," said

Kagan. "That's why I think these crime mystery programs are so popular and will continue to be popular. Everything is always solved by the end of the hour."

Hollywood is fast approaching its pilot season early next year in which networks pick shows for the 2009-10 season, and many writers see an ever-widening gap between the rarefied worlds in programs like *90210* and *Desperate Housewives*, and the real world of failing banks and swelling unemployment.

"What is interesting about TV is that many of the characters are rich and white. We don't have any *Roseanne* Barrs or *Archie Bunkers*," said John Greene, executive-producer of crime drama, *Law & Order: SVU*.

"The next year is going to be interesting in terms of the development cycle and what we put on TV," he said.

One thing seems certain. Since the start of the TV season in September, glitzy reality-TV contests seem to be on the wane. *Deal or No Deal* has seen viewers drop nearly 30 per cent to about eight million from last year, and *Dancing With the Stars* viewership was down about nine per cent before ending its current cycle.

REUTERS

Priestley's dreams almost come true

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada



When Jason Priestley was a young actor, he always used to see the notification cards given to nominees of Gemini Awards — Canada's highest television honour. But he never got one.

"I realized it was because I always work in America and of course I never get nominated for Geminis," says the Vancouver-born actor/director. "I started making a much more concerted effort to work more in Canada, thinking that one day I'd get nominated for a Gemini," he says airily, looking into the distance.

And, in 2003, he finally did ... but he didn't win.

So when the event's organizers asked him to hand out an award at last year's ceremony, he didn't have to think twice. "Of course, I got on a plane and I flew to Regina and I presented an award at the Geminis. (I was) very excited to do that!" proclaims Priestley.

Now, five years later, Priestley will retire the 90210 zip code where he found fame as Brandon Walsh for *M5V 2W6*, the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, where he'll switch roles to host this year's awards.

"This is my penultimate goal — hosting the Geminis."



GETTY IMAGES PHOTO

Actor Jason Priestley will host the Gemini Awards tonight.

"I'm 10 years older. I'm 10 pounds heavier. And that's going to make me 10 times better."

Actor Jason Priestley

is. Every year, I feel like I'm just getting a little bit closer to my actual goal of actually winning a Gemini! Baby steps, you know what I mean?" he jokes.

It's not the first time the star has come home to host. In 1998, he emceed the Juno Awards — the nation's highest music honour. According to Priestley, his 10-year hosting hiatus has only benefited him.

"I'm 10 years older. I'm

10 pounds heavier. And that's going to make me 10 times better," he says, drawing laughs from his wife nearby.

But it wasn't Priestley's past awards experience that he believes drove Gemini organizers choice.

"Apparently everybody else was booked and they got to the bottom of the list, they saw Jason Priestley and said, 'Meh, let's take a shot,'" he says,

mockingly. "Seriously. Deal or No Deal is five nights a week. Howie Mandel couldn't make it. Here I am!"

And for those more attuned to American shows like Mandel's over Canadian ones, Priestley says to watch the Gemini Awards, because you might be surprised by what you see.

"In one hour, you get to see a cross-section of the best in Canadian television and then, maybe something will spark with you and you'll go, 'Yeah, I'm going to put that on my PVR and I'll check it out later ... After I watch Jon Stewart.'"

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Surgery for Ray

Talk-show host Rachael Ray is having surgery on Dec. 16 to remove a benign cyst in her throat. She will resume production on The Rachael Ray Show in January. TVGUIDE.COM

TV viewers on the up and up — well, duh

IntelleVision



FIRST, THE GOOD NEWS: There are people who wouldn't consider it good news — I'm thinking of the nice but misguided souls behind TV Turnoff Week, or whatever they're calling it now — but as someone who can't see the downside of people getting more and more of their entertainment in the comfort of their homes, I was happy to read early this week that a new Nielsen study says that Americans are watching more TV than ever.

Gary Homes, a spokesman for Nielsen, told the Los Angeles Times business section that part of the reason is that there are more TVs in homes now. "That means that little Suzie can watch Gossip Girl in her bedroom," the Times wrote, "while Mom watches Dancing with the Stars in the basement and Dad watches football in

the den. There also are more and more niche channels, which means more people are interested in the shows currently on TV, (Homes) said. This year, the Olympics and the political campaigns brought a lot of people to TVs who wouldn't necessarily have been watching so much."

All of which falls into the "duh" category, though for some reason it's easier for me to get away with a whole evening in front of the tube these days than it was when I was a kid, and sent to psychiatrists who were obsessed with then-voguish concerns about "TV addiction" and brain development. Maybe it's just because I'm the guy who pays for the TV these days — it's a good thing kids take years to learn about the benefits of property rights.

TV viewing on average us up about five hours a month from the same time last year, and time-shifted viewing is up 50 per cent, an increase that's likely to continue if the economy stays sour. Internet viewing is also on the rise, and will probably persist as consumers trim back on enter-

Internet viewing is also on the rise, and will probably persist as consumers trim back on entertainment expenses.

tainment expenses. You can call file that news under obvious as well.

A more epochal sign of the times is the news that Fox, likely leading the pack as usual, is putting an end to Saturday morning cartoons, a TV programming institution since the dawn of the medium. Cable channels like Nickelodeon, Disney and the Cartoon Network, as well as Canadian networks such as YTV, Teletoon and Treehouse, have made the programming block obsolete, so Fox is turning it over to infomercials, and another cultural institution goes the way of late night movies, after-school specials and Billy Graham specials on prime-time.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

Hip hop, Britney and dance

Rick's TV Picks

Barrio 19

Air date: Nov. 29

Network: MTV2

FROM HIP-HOPPERS and beat-boxers to free-stylers and free-runners, middle class kids wannabes get to learn once again why poor kids are cooler.

Britney: For The Record

Air date: Nov. 30

Network: MuchMusic

BECAUSE nothing says cautionary tale like the story of the girl who made "ex-Mouseketeer" into a vaguely obscene epithet.

So you think You Can Dance

Air date: Dec. 3

Network: CTV

THE end is near, as the final four are about to become the final two.

RICK MCGINNIS/
METRO CANADA

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From Bowie's Ziggy to Miley's Montana, stage names here to stay

PAT HEALY
Metro World News

With the release of her latest album, I am ... Sasha Fierce, Beyoncé Knowles isn't the first to attempt confusing and alienating fans with the strange re-branding technique of creating the alter ego. Here's a look at famous aliases of music-past.

• DAVID BOWIE
ALTER EGO: ZIGGY STARDUST
The androgynous glittery frontman for The Spiders from Mars, Ziggy Stardust sported an electric red mullet and outrageous skin-tight costumes, and claimed he'd come to Earth to give humans hope for the five years before the world would end ... but by then, Bowie,

who was actually born David Jones, cooked up a coked-up new persona called "The Thin White Duke."
CULTURAL IMPACT: Ziggy basically invented the glam rock movement in the '70s and was likely the inspiration for legions of alter-egos that hit rock music in years to come, though few could top his bizarre coolness.

• GHOSTFACE KILLAH
ALTER EGO: IRONMAN, TONY STARKS

The original stage name of Dennis Coles comes from a lead character's

name in the 1979 Japanese kung fu film Mystery of Chess Boxing but his other alter ego is less obscure.

Ironman is derived from the Marvel comic of the same name (different syntax though) and in the comic, Starks is Iron Man's original identity.

CULTURAL IMPACT: Maybe we can thank Ghostface for the Summer of 2008 Iron Man craze, and 2009's forthcoming Iron Man 2 craze ... Otherwise, Ghostface is mostly recognized by his original stage name.

• GARTH BROOKS
ALTER EGO: CHRIS GAINES

Once Brooks got bored with singing about his friends in low places, he decided to flesh out his first starring role in a production that was to be called The Lamb by creating a greatest hits album by a fictional tortured rocker named Chris Gaines. The album bombed so badly that plans for the film were scrapped as was this short-lived alter ego.

CULTURAL IMPACT: Very little aside from providing inspiration for sleaze magician Criss Angel's look.

• MILEY CYRUS
ALTER EGO: HANNAH MONTANA

Given that this alter-ego was created by a major corporation, and not by Cyrus herself (whose real name is Destiny Hope Cyrus, by the way) we can't say there's much to offer in the differences between these two besides a blonde wig. Do the kids like Hannah and not Miley? Miley more than Hannah? Kids these days ...

CULTURAL IMPACT: Remains to be seen, but she is the first performer with an alter-ego to have her own 3D movie.



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HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 11/28/08	31	31	31	ABC	College Football	Inside Edition	Chronicle	The Polar Express *** (2004, Fantasy)	Nona Gaye	20/20		
	7	7	7	ASN	The Road to Avonlea	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	The School of Rock *** (2003, Comedy)	Jack Black	Stargate SG-1		
	11	11	11	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Air Farce-Final	Rick Mercer	Doctor Who	CBC News: The National	The Hour	
	32	32	32	CBS	News (N)	Evening News	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Ghost Whisperer (HDTV)	Ghost Whisperer (HDTV)	NUMB3RS	
	6	6	6	CIHF	Entertainment	ET Canada	90210 "The Jet Set"		NUMB3RS (HDTV)	90210	News (N)	
	9	9	9	CJCH	etalk	Hollywood	Law & Order "Bling"		Ghost Whisperer (HDTV)	Ghost Whisperer (HDTV)	News (N)	
	36	36	36	FOX	Deal-No Deal	The Simpsons	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	The School of Rock *** (2003, Comedy)	Jack Black	Fox First	
	12	12	12	NBC	News (N)	NBC News	Hollywood	Extra (N)	The Incredibles *** (2004, Adventure)	Voices of Craig T. Nelson.		
	55	55	55	SCOR	Hockey Talk	Game On	World Cup of Poker		WWE SmackDown!		Score Tonight	
	53	53	53	TSN	Off the Record	SportsCentre	NBA Basketball Atlanta Hawks at Toronto Raptors. (HDTV) (Live)				SportsCentre	
cable variety	16	16	16	A&E	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami "Sunblock"	CSI: Miami (HDTV)		CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami	
	70	70	70	APTN	News	Mixed Blessing	Rabbit Fall	The Rez	The Mask *** (1994, Comedy)	Jim Carrey.		
	37	37	37	BRVO	Street Legal		Desperate Housewives	Bravo! Fact	Water *** (2005, Drama)	Seema Biswas, Lisa Ray.		
	49	49	49	COM	Laughs	Comedy Now	Air Farce	Good Morning	Corner Gas	Rick Mercer	The Simpsons	South Park
	18	18	18	CNN	(5) The Situation Room		Lou Dobbs Tonight	Campbell Brown: No Bias			Larry King Live	Cooper 360
	38	38	38	DISC	Cash Cab	How It's Made	Daily Planet (N)		Greensburg (N)		Man vs. Wild "Zambia"	Earthshocks
	34	48	48	HGTV	Holmes on Homes		House Hunters	Property Virgin	House Hunters	Extreme Home	Build a New Life	Relocation
	46	46	46	HIST	Ultimate Engineering		NCIS "Red Cell"		Shockwave		Ultimate Engineering	Ax Men
	17	17	17	MM	50 Cent: Money and Power		You Can Dance		Dance	TBA	Clueless *** (1995, Comedy)	
	206	206	206	PIX	Godzilla-Moth.	(7:40) Godzilla ** (1998, Science Fiction)	Matthew Broderick.				Exotica *** (1994, Drama)	
	39	39	39	SHOW	EastEnders	Little Britain	Trailer Park	Red Carpet	Gemini Awards (N)		Testees	Kenny-Spenny
	40	40	40	SLICE	Matchmaker	Til Debt-Part	End of Leash	ET Canada	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Crash Test Mommy	End of Leash
	21	21	21	TLC	What Not to Wear		What Not to Wear		What Not to Wear		What Not to Wear	Say Yes-Dress
	22	22	22	W	House	Style by Jury	Will & Grace	Friends	Mediums	Mediums	Practical Magic ** (1998, Comedy-Drama)	
	27	27	27	YTV	The Mighty B!	iCarly	Uptown Girls ** (2003, Comedy)	Brittany Murphy.			Smallville "Gemini"	Dark Oracle

SATURDAY

HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 11/29/08	31	31	31	ABC	College Football	Patriots All-Access		College Football Teams to Be Announced. (HDTV) (Live)				
	7	7	7	ASN	The Road to Avonlea	The Kid ** (1997, Drama)	Rod Steiger, Jeff Saumier.			Comedy Now	Comedy Inc.	W FIVE
	11	11	11	CBC	Sat. Report	Hockey Night	NHL Hockey Philadelphia Flyers at Toronto Maple Leafs. (HDTV) (Live)					NHL Hockey
	32	32	32	CBS	College Football	Entertainment Tonight	NUMB3RS "Thirteen"			48 Hours Mystery "Drawn to Murder" (N)		
	6	6	6	CIHF	Ultimate Engineering	Tank Overhaul	Painkiller Jane			Kenny-Spenny	Kenny-Spenny	News (N)
	9	9	9	CJCH	W-FIVE (N) (DVS)	Law & Order: SVU	To Be Announced			Law & Order		News (N)
	36	36	36	FOX	Friends	KODAK Printer	Seinfeld	Cops	Cops	America's Most Wanted		Fox First
	12	12	12	NBC	News (N)	NBC News	Access Hollywood (N)			Along Came Polly ** (2004, Romance-Comedy)		Law/Ord SVU
	55	55	55	SCOR	Score Update	Footy Show	BodogFight			Strikeforce	Score on NFL	Footy Show
	53	53	53	TSN	SportsCentre	E:60	Boxing Ricky Hatton vs. Paulie Malignaggi. (HDTV)					Boxing: Phillips
cable variety	16	16	16	A&E	(5:30) My Cousin Vinny	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami (HDTV)			CSI: Miami "Shock"		The Sopranos
	70	70	70	APTN	Tribal Treks	Music Speaks	MYTV	The Mix	Rez Bluez		U.S. Marshals ** (1998, Crime Drama)	
	37	37	37	BRVO	Arts & Minds	Bravo! Videos	Live at the Rehearsal Hall			HMS Pinaflore and Trial by Jury		
	49	49	49	COM	Laughs	Comics!	Just for Laughs			Corner Gas	Blue Collar TV	The Simpsons
	18	18	18	CNN	This Week in Politics		Lou Dobbs This Week (HDTV)			Special Investigations		South Park
	38	38	38	DISC	How It's Made	How It's Made	Destroyed	Destroyed	Monster Moves		Canada's Worst Driver	Jeff Foxworthy
	34	48	48	HGTV	Holmes on Homes		Colin & Justin's Home Heist		Sarah's House	Mansions	Million Dollar Listing	D.L. Hughley
	46	46	46	HIST	Captain Cook: Obsession		NCIS "Hometown Hero"		Ancestors	Ancestors	Extreme-Home	Criss Angel
	17	17	17	MM	Gossip Girl		Clueless *** (1995, Comedy)	Alicia Silverstone.			All the King's Men ** (2006, Drama)	
	206	206	206	PIX	(6:10) Bad Boys (1995)		(8:10) Monty Python's The Meaning of Life (1983)				50 Cent: Money and Power	Dance
	39	39	39	SHOW	(5) Spanglish (2004)		About a Girl	Kink in Hair	Every Second Counts (2008, Drama)	Stephen Collins.		Ararat ** (2002, Historical Drama)
	40	40	40	SLICE	In Laws	In Laws	Til Debt-Part	Newlywed	Beautiful	Party Mamas	Tori & Dean: Home	Housewives
	21	21	21	TLC	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate	Little People	Little People	16 Children and Moving In		Property Ladder (HDTV)	Trading
	22	22	22	W	Elizabethtown ** (2005, Comedy-Drama)	Orlando Bloom, Kirsten Dunst, Susan Sarandon.					The Wedding Date (2005, Romance-Comedy)	
	27	27	27	YTV	Adrenaline Proj	Mystery Hnt.	Wolverine	Transformers	Naruto	Blue Dragon	Zatch Bell (N)	Bleach

SUNDAY

HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 11/30/08	31	31	31	ABC	News (N)	ABC News	Funniest Home Videos	Extreme Makeover: Home		Desperate Housewives	Brothers	
	7	7	7	ASN	Young Blades		Funniest Home Videos	Gossip Girl (HDTV) (N)		Cold Case (HDTV) (N)	Cold Case	
	11	11	11	CBC	Heartland (N) (DVS)		Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2005, Fantasy)			Harry Potter-Goblet of Fire	fifth estate	
	32	32	32	CBS	NFL Football		60 Minutes (HDTV) (N)	The Amazing Race 13		Cold Case (HDTV) (N)	The Unit	
	6	6	6	CIHF	16X9 (N)	King of the Hill	Brothers & Sisters (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Family Guy	American Dad	News (N)
	9	9	9	CJCH	Star Wars Clo.	Degrassi: Next	CSI: NY	The Amazing Race 13		Desperate Housewives	News (N)	
	36	36	36	FOX	Cold Case		To Be Announced	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Family Guy	American Dad	Fox First
	12	12	12	NBC	News (N)	NBC News	Football Night in America	(9:15) NFL Football Chicago Bears at Minnesota Vikings. (HDTV) (Live)				
	55	55	55	SCOR	(6) NFL Blitz		The WWE Experience	BodogFight		NFL Blitz	NBA Basketball	
	53	53	53	TSN	SportsCentre		Football Night in America	(9:15) NFL Football Chicago Bears at Minnesota Vikings. (HDTV) (Live)				
cable variety	16	16	16	A&E	CSI: Miami (HDTV)		CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami "Addiction"		CSI: Miami	CSI: Miami	
	70	70	70	APTN	Great Towns	MYTV	Rez Bluez	Music Speaks	The Mix	Lakota Woman: Siege at Wounded Knee		
	37	37	37	BRVO	Mad Men		Arts & Minds	Bravo! Fact	Royal Winnipeg Ballet: 40		The Bourne Supremacy (2004, Suspense)	
	49	49	49	COM	Laughs	Comics!	Winnipeg Comedy Festival		Laughs	Rick Mercer	The Simpsons	South Park
	18	18	18	CNN	Lou Dobbs This Week (HDTV)		Newsroom		Special Investigations		Larry King Live	Comedy Net
	38	38	38	DISC	Cash Cab	How It's Made	MythBusters		The Body Machine (N)			D.L. Hughley
	34	48	48	HGTV	Green Homes	Extreme Home	House Hunters	Buy Me	Property Virgin	Unsellable	Extreme Makeover: Home	MythBusters
	46	46	46	HIST	Finding the Fallen		NCIS "SWAK"		Battleships: Terror		Under Siege *** (1992, Action)	Holmes-Homes
	17	17	17	MM	Gossip Girl		Gossip Girl		You Can Dance		Dance	Britney
	206	206	206	PIX	(6:50) Red Sundown		(8:15) Along Came a Spider ** (2001, Suspense)				Posse *** (1993, Western)	Britney
	39	39	39	SHOW	TBA	Kink in Hair	The Guard (HDTV)		Siblings * (2004, Comedy)	Alex Campbell, Sarah Gadon.		Weeds
	40	40	40	SLICE	Inside Hollywood		Vanity Insanity (DVS)		Wedding SOS	Bulging Brides	Make It Work ... Out	Biggest Loser
	21	21	21	TLC	Untold Stories of the E.R.		Big as Life: Obesity		Addicted to Food (HDTV)		I Eat 33,000 Calories a Day	750-lb Man
	22	22	22	W	Hwd 10 Best	Shopping Bags	Mr. Right ... Is Stuck in Traffic		Don't Cry Now (2007, Drama)	Jason Priestley, Leslie Hope.	Another Day	
	27	27	27	YTV	Christmas With the Kranks ** (2004, Comedy)				SpongeBob	Prank Patrol	The Next Star	Falcon Beach

The bestselling albums at Amazon.ca

1. And Winter Came, Enya, right; 2. A Winter Symphony, Sarah Brightman; 3. A Midwinter Night's Dream, Loreena McKennitt; 4. Chinese Democracy, Guns N' Roses; 5. Promise, Il Divo. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

**Music**

Music notes for Christmas

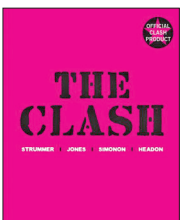
SoundCheck**Alan Cross**

alan@ongoinghistory.com

It's Black Friday in America, the traditional start of the full-contact holiday shopping frenzy. Even though for most Canadians it's just another day at work, the thought of working through the Christmas lists has no doubt begun to inspire that familiar mix of dread and nausea.

But I'm here to help. I've always been a big giver of books because I believe people need to read more. Feel free to tear out this page and use it as a shopping list.

• **For the Punk Fan:** The Clash



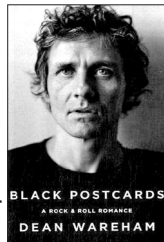
material keeps on coming. This year, there's a fantastic coffee table book (A coffee table book? About punk? And it's pink?) simply called The Clash. It's officially sanctioned by the band and its heirs and contains history, eye-witness accounts and photographs never before seen by anyone. Marvelous.

• **For the Turntable Freak:** Vinyl records are back in vogue for a certain group of obsessives (yours truly included), something that has spawned a series of books that reflect on the importance of the LP. Among the best is The Long-Player Goodbye: The Album from Vinyl to iPod and Back Again by Travis Elborough. The title pretty much says it all.

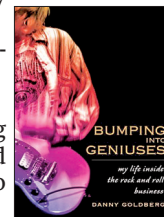


• **For the Indie Fan:** Dean Wareham used to head up a couple of excellent American indie bands — Galaxie

500 and Luna — that fell between the cracks during the grunge revolution of the 90s. He's written a memoir detailing the experience in heartbreaking detail called Black Postcards: A Rock & Roll Romance. Rock writing doesn't get much more personal than this.



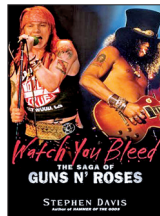
• **For the Outsider Looking In:** Danny Goldberg's resume includes everything from doing PR for Led Zeppelin to running three major record labels. He also managed a series of bands from Fleetwood Mac (during the divorce years) to Nirvana (when Kurt died). His memoir, Bumping into Geniuses, also details encounters with Springsteen, Kiss, Patti



Smith and many others.

• **For the GnR Fan Who STILL Can't Get Enough:**

Stephen Davis, author of the definitive Zeppelin bio, Hammer of the Gods, returns with Watch You Bleed: The Saga of Guns N' Roses. Among his many observations is that he says the band began to fall apart as soon as Izzy Stradlin left.



• **For Those Who Would Rather Just Listen:** Sorry about the shameless plug, but The Alan Cross Guide to Alternative Rock, Vols. 1-4 are out now. Audio books are great for the commute.



The Ongoing History of New Music can be heard on stations across Canada. Read more at exploremusic.com and ongoinghistory.com

Beyoncé tops chart

Beyoncé has scored her third straight No. 1 debut on the pop album chart with the double-disc I Am ... Sasha Fierce.

The Music World/Columbia album shifted a whopping 482,000 copies in the United States during the week ended Nov. 23, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The set, split between material credited to R&B star Beyoncé and her new alter-ego, Sasha Fierce, has already spawned the hits If I Were a Boy and Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It). Be-



Beyoncé

yoncé's 2003 release, Dangerously in Love, started with 317,000, while 2006's B'Day moved 541,000.

In a week with seven top 20 debuts on the Billboard 200, Nickelback's Dark Horse sold 326,000 to start at No. 2. The rock outfit spent 156 weeks on the chart with previous album.

REUTERS

Metro recommends• **TAYLOR SWIFT, FEARLESS:**

Near perfect synergy of country twang and classy pop from a refreshingly open-hearted and golden-voiced teenager.

• **LIONESS, SELF-TITLED:**

Haunting chanteuse amps up dark disco-infused electronica grand enough to suit either the dancefloor or your headphones.

• **T-PAIN, THR33 RINGZ:**

Raspy auto-tuned MC delivers a jovial variety show of R&B love jams and hip-hop club bangers.



METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Christmas Gift Markets

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Evenings 5-9 PM
Dec 3, 4, 5 & Dec 10, 11, 12

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Hand Crafted – Local Artisans
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– Bill Brownstein, *Montreal Gazette*

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HOT & HAPPENING WEEKEND EVENTS

Mike Cowie

Nov. 28–29, 9 p.m.
The Harbourfront at Casino
Nova Scotia
1983 Upper Water Street

Trumpeter Mike Cowie is performing for three consecutive nights at The Harbourfront at Casino Nova Scotia tonight and tomorrow at 9 p.m. There is no cover charge for the show.

Neil Young after show

Nov. 29, 11 p.m.
The Seahorse Tavern
1665 Argyle Street

The Neil Young post-party featuring The Greyhounds, The Skyhawks and The Stanfields takes place tomorrow night at The Seahorse Tavern. The show begins following the Neil Young concert at The Metro Centre.

Contemporary music

Nov. 28, 8 p.m.
SMU Art Gallery
5865 Gorsebrook Avenue

Three of Canada's finest contemporary musicians — Janice Jackson, Michelle Cheramy and Simon Docking — will be performing tomorrow at 8 p.m. at the Saint Mary's University Art Gallery. Tickets are \$20 and can be reserved by phoning 429-1899.

The Marquee Club

Nov. 28-29, 10 p.m.
The Marquee Club
2037 Gottingen Street

The Marquee Club is hosting two shows this weekend. New York City's Beatnuts is in town with Ghetosocks and DJ Jorun Bombay tonight at 10 p.m. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. Tomorrow at 10 p.m., The Jimmy Swift Band is playing with Magnus Haze with tickets costing \$15.

A Christmas Carol

Nov. 28-29
Neptune Studio Theatre
1593 Argyle Street

Jeremy Webb's one-man production of Dickens' A Christmas Carol opens with showings tonight and tomorrow the Neptune Studio Theatre. Opening night is tonight at 7:30 p.m., with showings at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. tomorrow. Tickets are \$18.50 and can be purchased by phoning 429-7070.

Santa Claus Parade

Nov. 30, 1 p.m.
Herring Cove Road and
Punchbowl Road, Spryfield

Santa Claus is coming to Spryfield. This Sunday, the jolly old elf will take part in the Spryfield Santa Claus Parade, the longest-running parade of its kind in Atlantic Canada. The parade starts at 1 pm at Herring Cove Road and Punchbowl Drive, and ends at South Centre Mall. Bring the kids, and dress warm!

Metro's 7th Heaven: Metro taps what's hot right now

1 Britney's come-back

All eyes will be on singer Britney Spears as she performs on the MTV Video Music Awards on Tuesday, Dec. 2. This show will be her first live performance since her MTV Video Awards disaster last year. The date of the show also coincides with her 27th birthday.

2 Chunky baubles

The hottest accessories right now are thick, jewel-encrusted necklaces and bracelets. Sparkle and shine by picking up jewelry with large crystals and prominent metalwork.

3 "Hot" chocolate

To add a kick to your holiday parties, serve guests spiced hot chocolate. Try mixing cinnamon, ancho or chili powder into the drink, and be sure to use either dark chocolate or unsweetened cocoa powder.

4 Twilight sequel

After the stunning success of the Twilight movie at box offices around the world, director Catherine Hardwicke is also talking about directing the sequel New Moon. The New Moon script has already been completed, exciting eager fans in the process.

5 Less-extravagant gifts

As the economy continues to falter, consumers are embracing smaller and more frugal gifts for Christmas. Even Oprah Winfrey has adopted this trend by featuring less expensive items on her popular Favourite Things episode.

6 Cheerful carols

What better way to nurture your Christmas spirit than by listening to some holiday tunes? Whether it's Frank, Bing, or Mariah, Christmas music is now a seasonal staple in stores and homes.

7 West wows

Kanye West released his latest album, 808s and Heartbreak, this week. The disc marks a departure from West's traditional musical fare, as he sings through AutoTune software instead of rapping.

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Clooney, Spacey among celebs invited to star-studded dinner party

Actors George Clooney and Kevin Spacey were among the guests at a star-studded dinner party last weekend hosted by New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson to thank them for filming in the state. **IMDB.COM**

Escort 'sexed up' story: Lawyer

Boy George's lawyer said Wednesday the man who has accused the British singer of tying him up and beating him with a chain last year "sexed up" his story to sell it to the press.

Lawyer Adrian Waterman told Snaresbrook Crown Court in east London that Norwegian male escort Audun Carlsen had lied about his meetings with the 47-year-old, best known for fronting the band Culture Club in the 1980s.

"You have lied to the police," he said. "You have tried to make this story more exciting. You have added details and you have sold your story to the press and you have every intention of doing so again."

Carlsen disagreed, saying: "Do you think I would put myself through all this for the sake of a few thousand pounds?"

During his cross-examination of the witness on the third day of the trial, Waterman suggested Carlsen had received injuries to his arm and neck from bondage gear worn during a photo shoot with Boy George, being tried un-



Singer Boy George, whose real name is George O'Dowd, leaves Snaresbrook Crown Court in east London on Monday.

der his real name George O'Dowd.

He produced coloured photographs taken on the night and showed them to the judge and jury. A short video clip was also shown.

Carlsen said the injuries

were the result of his handcuffing and beating at the hands of O'Dowd, who sat impassively during Wednesday's hearing. O'Dowd denies one charge of false imprisonment.

Carlsen also told the

"You have added details and you have sold your story to the press and you have every intention of doing so again."

Adrian Waterman

court he believed O'Dowd had attacked him on their second meeting, in April 2007, because he had refused to have sex with him the first time they met in January.

During the January meeting, which centred around a pornographic photo shoot for which Carlsen was paid, O'Dowd performed a sex act on him before he stopped him, Carlsen said earlier this week.

O'Dowd says he became angry because Carlsen had tampered with his computer and taken photographs from it to use on the website Gaydar without the singer's permission. He complained to Carlsen several times, the court has heard.

REUTERS

'Great White Way' on Broadway goes green

THEATRE Marquees in New York City's Broadway theatre district will go "green" this year as part of a plan to save energy and the environment.

Broadway's "Great White Way," nicknamed for the many marquee and billboard lights that flood the theatre district with light, will soon be the "Great Green Way," New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg said at a news conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre to launch the initiative.

"By this time next year, the lights on Broadway will burn just as bright, but the energy bills and our city's carbon output will be lower," Bloomberg said.

Already, 10 Broadway theatres have changed 10,000 exterior and interior bulbs to more energy ef-

ficient compact fluorescent bulbs as part of the initiative organized by the mayor, the Broadway League and the National Resources Defense Council.

Broadway theatres plan to do everything from washing their costumes in cold water to producing and disposing of sets in a more environmentally friendly way to lower the theatre industry's carbon footprint, organizers said.

"By this time next year, the lights on Broadway will burn just as bright, but the energy bills and our carbon output will be lower."

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg

Several characters from Broadway shows made cameo appearances in support of the plan to lower carbon emissions.

"Higher ... bad! Lower... good!" roared the character Monster from the Broadway musical Young Frankenstein, who appeared with Avenue Q's Nicky and Wicked's Elphaba.

REUTERS

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Calorie-counting Carey says no to champagne
Singer Mariah Carey said she refuses to drink champagne because it is "fattening." FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Celebrity Buzz

Photog defends Miley shots

CONTROVERSY Celebrity photographer Annie Leibovitz insists her controversial Miley Cyrus shoot for Vanity Fair was justified, because the pictures of the teenager were "innocent," imdb.com reports.

Leibovitz's photos of the singer/actress, wearing just a blanket wrapped around her bare back and chest, caused outrage earlier this year because she was just 15 years old at the time.

The photographer is adamant the results were misinterpreted.

"The Miley picture was a beautiful, strong, simple picture," she tells the New York Post. "I think it's actually sort of innocent on some level. She loved taking that picture, and she

was ready to take that picture. It's just that her audience wasn't ready."



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Winslet loves new wrinkles

PEOPLE Kate Winslet says she "loves" her wrinkles, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 33-year-old actress insists she would never have Botox injected into her forehead because she enjoys seeing her face change as she gets older.

"I just love seeing those things," she says. "I am enjoying my face changing."

METRO NEWS
SERVICES



Britney's alleged diet sparks worry

PEOPLE Pop star Britney Spears, who recently unveiled a newly toned figure which she claims is down to a healthy eating and fitness regime, is battling an eating disorder, one of her bodyguards has allegedly revealed.

"Britney's diet consists mostly of



Taco Bell and turkey jerky washed down with Red Bull," a source close to one of Spears' bodyguards told Star magazine.

It has also been claimed the 26-year-old star is taking diet pills in order to maintain her new slim shape.

"The pills are like diuretics," another source said. "It just runs right through her."

Spears, who is said to have lost around 28 pounds in the last year, reportedly starting shedding weight when she began training for her upcoming world tour.

"Britney is thrilled she has finally got her pre-baby body," the source said. "But we are really worried she might not be going about it in the healthiest way."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Reese a shy speaker

PEOPLE Reese Witherspoon was devastated when she won an Academy Award in 2006 for her role in Johnny Cash biopic Walk The Line, because it forced her to confront her fear of public speaking, imdb.com reports.

While all the other best actress nominees at Hollywood's Kodak Theatre hoped and prayed for their names to be read out, Witherspoon insists she

wasn't ready to step up on-stage and address the star-studded audience.

"The whole time I was sitting there, hoping they wouldn't call my name, just because the idea of having to give a speech in front of everyone in the world is terrifying," she says. "It basically sums up who you are and you know it's going to be the clip that people show for the rest of your life."

METRO NEWS
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Jolie still mourns mom

FAMILY Angelina Jolie is "still a mess" over the death of her mother, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The actress, whose mother died in January 2007, is still struggling to come to terms with life without Marcheline Bertrand, and is worried she will never be as close to anyone else again.

"She has to keep it together for the sake of her kids, but she is only human and falls apart from time to time," a source said.

"She is still a mess over Marcheline's departure, believing no one understands her the way her mother did. They had a very strong bond that she feels she will never have with another person."

Jolie reportedly depends on partner Brad Pitt for support during her darkest times, and also relies on her six children to raise her spirits.

"Brad has been her rock, and he will always be there for her," the source added. "Without his love, she would never have been able to cope."

METRO NEWS
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GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Law, Frost back together?

RELATIONSHIPS Actor Jude Law and Sadie Frost have sparked rumours of a reconciliation after going house hunting together, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The former couple, who divorced in 2003 after six years of marriage, are said to be getting their relationship back on track and have decided to purchase a property to give the four children they raise together a home in the countryside.

"Jude and Sadie have been getting on fantastically in the past six months," a source says. "He decided to help her buy some where in Hampshire, in the countryside, a real family

place. They plan to invest together and give their children a truly loving home."

Law and Frost have also booked a vacation to South America with their kids so they can all spend Christmas together.

"They have always tried to stay on good terms for the sake of their kids and Christmas is important to both of them. So this year they're splashing out on a luxury break to Brazil to spend the festive break as a family," the source adds.

Britain's Daily Mirror newspaper. "Pals are desperately hoping a romantic reunion is on the cards."

METRO NEWS
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Nun role won't suit Portman

ACTING Natalie Portman turned down the chance to play a nun opposite movie great Meryl Streep in Doubt because she can't get her head around celibacy, imdb.com reports.

The actress was at one point very interested in the movie adaptation of John Patrick Shanley's hit play, but she turned the part down because she couldn't see herself as a lifelong virgin.

The playwright who also directed the movie told GossipSauce.com: "Natalie was very interested but kept saying she had a problem. And we finally nailed down as to what the problem was: She basically said she didn't understand celibacy."

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Houston denies Brown reunion

RELATIONSHIPS Whitney Houston has denied reports she's reunited with ex-husband Bobby Brown after the pair was spotted enjoying a romantic dinner together in Georgia, imdb.com reports.

The two sparked reports they had rekindled their romance after photos surfaced of the pair spending time together, reports the Chicago Sun Times.

Her spokesperson said they remain separate but "good friends."

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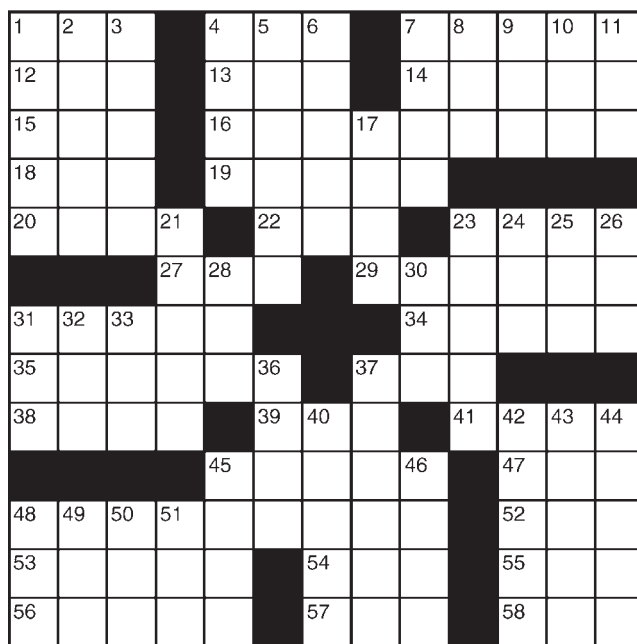
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Take Five



Crossword across

1 Bug killer
4 "— Wiedersehen"
7 Son of Japheth
12 Second person
13 Chromosome component
14 Home
15 Under the weather
16 Titmouse's cousin
18 Ph. bk. info
19 Bizarre
20 CSA uniforms
22 Pi follower
23 Entreaty
27 Feedbag tidbit
29 Swindle
31 Really bad

34 Blue hue
35 Printed calico
37 Wood-shaping tool
38 Chinese gang
39 Have
41 Host
45 Wine option
47 Perfume label word
48 Taco Bell mascot
52 Sleeve contents
53 Made on a loom
54 Rowboat need
55 Poorly lit
56 Rendezvous
57 On in years
58 For example

Crossword down

1 Very eager (to)
2 Sorrow
3 Oklahoma city
4 Not pizzicato
5 Not needing medical attention
6 Hill of music
7 Put together
8 Lawyers' org.
9 Pantheon member
10 "— to Joy"
11 "Golly!"
17 Gator's kin
21 Mormon leader
23 Popular takeout entree
24 Baton Rouge sch.
25 Always, in verse
26 Pub order

28 Model Carol
30 Conned
31 Performance
32 One of the five W's
33 Dorsal appendage
36 "J'accuse" writer
37 Yearly
40 Rodeo rider's cry
42 Peruses
43 "West Side Story" song
44 "Delish!"
45 Batter's tactic
46 Jack, e.g.
48 100 lbs.
49 Perp. to vert.
50 Trellis climber
51 "— So Fine"

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

D	A	B	G	A	E	L	T	O	F	U
E	L	I	U	N	D	O	I	B	I	S
B	I	L	L	I	N	G	S	A	O	N
L	A	D	Y	E	A	R	E	N	D	
G	L	O	W	E	R	N	A			
R	O	W	D	E	W	D	E	B	T	S
A	B	E	L	D	O	G	D	I	R	E
M	E	D	I	A	K	E	Y	L	I	C
		O	F	T	M	E	R	L	O	T
Q	U	A	N	T	U	M	L	E	I	
U	R	G	E	B	I	L	L	F	O	L
I	D	E	S	A	L	O	E	N	E	O
P	L	U	S	S	S	O	U	R	S	E

9	1	2	5	7	3	4	6	8
3	5	6	8	4	9	7	2	1
4	8	7	1	2	6	5	9	3
6	4	8	3	9	2	1	5	7
1	3	9	4	5	7	6	8	2
7	2	5	6	1	8	3	4	9
2	7	1	9	6	4	8	3	5
5	6	3	2	8	1	9	7	4
8	9	4	7	3	5	2	1	6

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 minGenius
13-17 min.....Scholar

17-21 minSmart
21-25 minNot bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

6				3			9	
			8			1		
9		5			2	3		
		3						5
5		1	3		4	7		6
2						8		
		7	2			9		3
		6			5			
	2			8				4

Metro Recipe of the Day



Sausages with Spiced Wine and Apples

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/4 cup (300 mL) dry white wine
1/2 lb (230g) pork or chicken sausages
1 shallot or 1/2 small onion
2 crisp dessert apples
5 tbsp (70g) butter, at room temperature
3/4 cup (175 mL) chicken or vegetable stock
2 tbsp (25 mL) light brown sugar
1/2 tsp (10 mL) ground cinnamon

METHOD:

1. Bring wine to boil in a large frying pan and poach sausages gently for 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, peel and grate shallot or onion; peel, quarter, core, and slice

apples.

3. Gently melt small knob of butter in a second frying pan. Remove sausages from first pan, reserving wine. Discard loose skins and fry sausages slowly in butter until browned all over.
4. Meanwhile, add shallot or onion to white wine in first pan; with apples, stock, brown sugar, cinnamon and remaining butter. Bring mixture to boil, reduce heat and simmer until apples become tender and liquid is reduced to thin syrup. Serve with apple sauce. **SERVES 2**

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!



Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES

MARCH 21-APRIL 20



A concerned friend helps you to understand. It's too late to apologize for an impulsive reaction. Co-operation can help to break bad habits.

LIBRA

SEPT 23-OCT 23



Let go of an argument before being forced to. You'll make a hasty decision. Contact a relative for peace of mind.

TAURUS

APRIL 21-MAY 21



A new job prospect is revealed by chance. The next few weeks bring fresh revelations. Put a stop to constant phone calls..

SCORPIO

OCT 24-NOV 22



Unexpected rules will lighten your workload. A bully will cause a sleepless night. Ease your conscience about a minor rebellion.

GEMINI

MAY 22-JUNE 21



A hush-hush project will soon be in the news. Sort out the disorder in your affairs. An eccentric person reveals a history of defiance.

SAGITTARIUS

NOV 23-DEC 21



Someone is keeping an eye on you. Do something you've been afraid to try. Make an exit from a stifling stalemate.

CANCER

JUNE 22-JULY 22



A sense of destiny lifts your mood. Confusion about acceptable behaviour is troubling. Tell people what they want to hear.

CAPRICORN

DEC 22-JAN 20



Don't drive anyone crazy with your ambitious plans. A conflict leads to torment for a friend. Prompt action outwits a protective person.

LEO

JULY 23-AUG 23



Deep thoughts will baffle you. A friend comes clean about an ulterior motive. Carelessness leads to harsh words.

AQUARIUS

JAN 21-FEB 18



Be kind to a woman in love. A strange reaction should be observed closely. An old friend makes things right again.

VIRGO

AUG 24-SEPT 22



Being guarded impedes your progress. Step in to ease the burdens of others. Disappointments will melt away by night time.

PISCES

FEB 19-MARCH 20



A woman's suggestion will lessen your worries. Someone will leave the scene. A nerdy guy will cause amusing confusion.

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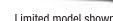
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